The Effectiveness of Indirect Error Correction Feedback on the Quality of Students' Writing

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Abstract

Giving feedback in the process of teaching writing is a common practice by writing teachers because it is believed to be able to help students write better. The feedback may be given directly or indirectly. The feedback may be given in the form of comments, questions, suggestions, and or corrections. It seems to be no dispute about the first three kinds of feedback. But for the corrections as the feedback in the process of teaching writing, there are two opposing views, one view believes that correction is counter-productive while the other view believes that correction is helpful. In this research, three kinds indirect correction feedback was implemented, sample end comment (SEC) feedback, coded correction (CC) feedback, and non-coded correction (NCC) feedback. Experimental research was used to find out which indirect correction feedback will give more effective result in the students' writing quality.

Key words: error correction feedback and writing quality.

Introduction

The goal of teaching writing in colleges or universities in Indonesia is to help students to be able to write well. Writing well here refers to the ability to produce a piece of written text that meets all the characteristics of a good writing such as unity in the topic discussed, smooth organization of ideas, appropriate use of vocabulary suitable for its context, correct use of language in terms of word choice and correct grammar, and correct use of mechanics such as punctuation and spelling.

It is realized, however, that writing in English is not easy for most writing students. Writing in English as a foreign language is very much different from writing in the first language of most students in Indonesia. English is different from Indonesian in spelling, vocabulary, and grammar. That is why writing skill development takes relatively a long time. Writing courses in colleges or universities usually consist of Writing I, Writing II, Writing III, and Writing IV. To develop students' writing ability, teachers also have to help students learn grammar and vocabulary. The main purpose of teaching writing is, in general, of course, to help students to write in English well and more specifically to help students to write well in accomplishing their academic writing assignments such as a paper, a thesis, or a dissertation.

Nevertheless, many students still have problems in writing in English. The results of some research conducted so far have shown that errors are still made by writing learners. Roni (2006) revealed 40% of the subjects had problem in writing a topic sentence, 35% of the subjects had problem in diction, and 25% of the subjects had problem in description. Astasari (2009) found out that the highest frequency of grammar errors in writing is omission errors (41.51%), the second highest frequency is error of misformation (35.50%), the next highest frequency is error of addition (21.74%), and disordering errors come as the lowest frequency (1.3%). Fitriyah, et. al (2007) discovered that the errors the students made can be categorized into three main types, i.e. interlingual errors of inference from the native language, intralingual errors within the target language, and inaccuracies in measuring and appropriating to the sociolinguistic context of communication. Meanwhile, Muth'im (2010) identified two components of writing that still become serious problems for many learners. The two main problems were in organization (35.71%) and in language use (57.14%). In term of organization, for instance, the problems found were the inability of the learners to express the ideas fluently, the failure to show which ideas belong to the general statement as background and which ideas belong to thesis statement that will guide them to discuss in the body paragraph(s), the inability to organize the ideas in a well-organized and logical manner, and the failure to divide their ideas into paragraphs. In terms of language use, the problems found in this study were the inability to write complex constructions effectively, the mismatch between concord and agreement, the incorrect use of tenses; the incorrect use of number, the incorrect use of word order, the incorrect use of pronoun, and the incorrect use of preposition.

The phenomena revealed by those studies may make us, English teachers or lecturers teaching writing realize that one thing should be carried out to help students to get out of the problem. One thing that may be worth doing and appreciated by the learners is giving feedback. It is expected that the feedback the students receive from their teachers make them more focused and concentrated on what is being learned. Furthermore, it is also expected that the feedback given by the teachers makes them more aware of their strengths and weaknesses in one learning course so that they can make use of these strengths to overcome the weaknesses. Sharmini and Kumar (2011:1) claim "It is through feedback that writers are guided to achieve negotiated writing goals".

Feedback, according to Lewis (2002), is advantageous not only for the learners but also for the teachers. For teachers, it gives information about individual and collective class progress and, indirectly, is a form of evaluation on their own teaching. For learners, feedback is an ongoing form of assessment which is more focused than grades. In short, feedback is used by a teacher to help learners improve their learning. It is believed that by having feedback the students become more motivated in learning.

Feedback may be given in different forms and various intentions. It may be given in the form of comments, questions, and suggestions (Yingdong, 2006). Feedback given in the form of questions may be intended that the learners need to add more explanation or additional information about what they are doing in learning. Feedback given in the form of comments might mean to give support or encourage the learners to keep on learning. Meanwhile, feedback given in the form of suggestion means to suggest what should be accomplished by the learners so that their learning task and performance become better.

Correction is another form of feedback. Like other forms of feedback, correction is also used to help students learn better. Correction differs from other forms of feedback in its intention. As the name implies, correction is given in order that the learners can correct their incorrect learning performances. This might be in line with what Dasse-Askildson states "correction is designed to help them move toward a more target like form" (Dasse-Askildson, 2008, P. 1). In relation to this issue, Katayama (2007) suggests that the most favored correction method is for the teacher to give the students a hint which might enable them to notice error and self-correct. In other words, as Corder (as quoted in Ellis, 2001, P. 48) claims

> "errors could be significant in three ways: (1) they provide the teacher with information about how much the students have learnt, (2) they provide the researcher with evidence of how much language was learnt, and (3) they serve as devices by which the students have discovered the rule of the target language".

In general, two seemingly contradictive approaches are implemented in dealing with errors. The first approach might be inspired by the Audiolingual Approach. According to Han (2002), this approach advocates minimal or no tolerance of learner errors and suggests that every effort be made to prevent them. This is in line with what Fang and Xue-mei (2007) claim that since an error may serve as a negative stimulus which reinforces 'bad habits', it should not be allowed to occur. Allowing incorrect language production is believed to result in fossilized language.

The second approach might be inspired by the Natural Approach (Han, 2002) which considers errors as a sign of students' learning, so correction is considered unnecessary and counter-productive. Han (2002) further pointed out Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an example of this kind. The primary concern of this approach is the development of fluency. In order that fluency develops well the practice of using language may not be hindered by teachers' intervention or correction. This might be in line with Savignon's (2001) claims that through practice and experience in an increasingly wide range of communicative contexts and events, learners gradually expand their communicative competence, consisting of grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence.

Two contradictive views of correction also occur in dealing with errors in writing. One view claims that correction does not make learners write better. Truscott (1996), for instance, has strongly voiced that grammar correction has no place in writing and should be abandoned. In his research on the effect of error correction on learners' ability to write accurately, Truscott (2007) found that within 95% level of confidence, correction has no better than a small beneficial effect

on accuracy, that any beneficial effects are too small to even qualify as small effects. To support his stance, Truscott quoted some research that had been previously carried out. For example, he quoted the result of Hendrickson (1981) 's study which revealed that no significant difference was found between the effects of comprehensive correction and correction of global errors only. Another study quoted by Truscott was the one conducted by Lalande (1982) who studied intermediate German students at U.S. universities, comparing one group that received coded correction and used error logs to track their errors to another that received explicit correction without logs. Lalande found that the former showed no significant gains, yielding modest effect size of .288. Truscott also quoted the study conducted by Frantzen (1995) who did a 15-week study with intermediate Spanish learners in a university setting in the U.S. She included an uncoded-correction group and a "grammar group" that also had extensive grammar reviews and was expected to correct their errors, with additional feedback from the teacher on these corrections. She found no significant differences between the groups on accuracy in their essay.

The other view believes that correction contributes to the quality of students' writing. The most prominent scholar who holds this belief is Ferris. To support her view point, Ferris (2006) herself conducted some studies. One of the studies she conducted reveals that a strong relationship between teachers' error markings and successful student revisions on the subsequent drafts of their essays was found. In response to the criticisms expressed by Truscott (1996), in her article published in 2004, Ferris (2004) quoted some studies that had been conducted previously. Kepner (1991) in investigating the difference between groups receiving error corrections or message-related comments found that error correction group made 15% fewer errors than the other group. Another study she quoted was the one conducted by Lalande (1982) who investigated differences between groups receiving direct or indirect corrections and found that indirect feedback group made more progress in accuracy overtime. Meanwhile, Zainuddin (2004) in investigating the effect of giving feedback to students' writing discovered that the provision of feedback improves student's writing. Positive results of error correction were also revealed by Naeini (2008) who found out that the performance of the participants in experimental group out-performed the performance of the participants in control group. Alroe (2011), after reviewing the results of some studies finally came to the conclusion that error correction can produce significant benefits.

Though the findings seem to contradict each other, they may not make writing teachers confused. These contradictive findings may be understood as the reflection of how the researchers approach certain research problem. Hartshorn, et al. (2010), argue that the conflicting findings may result from the three different contexts: the learner, the situation, and the instructional methodology. Moreover, the results of some research on the perception of learners toward correction show positive responses. Since teaching is intended to help students to learn better, the following findings may become strong reasons for the teachers to keep on giving feedback. For instance, Greenslade and Felix-Brasdefer (2006) claim that FL learners expressed a strong preference for feedback on formal features of their writing such as grammar, lexical, and mechanical errors. This is similar to what Katayama found that "students had strong positive attitudes toward teacher correction of errors and indicated a preference for correction of pragmatic errors over other kinds of errors" (Katayama, 2007, P. 289). Saito (1994) also discovered that students preferred teacher feedback (teacher correction, teacher correction with comments, error identification, commentary, teacher-students conferencing) to non-teacher feedback (peer correction and self correction). This is in line with what Rauber and Gil (2004) found that learners appreciate and consider the teacher's correction highly important for the

development of their language skills. Han (2002) then resumes that all provide evidence that L2 learners are indeed responsive to various forms of error correction, though the extent to which they respond varies. Struyven, Duchy and Janssen (2005) argue that research findings reveal that students' perception about assessment significantly influence their approaches to learning and studying.

Though the findings of research show contradictive results, from the perspective of pedagogy and the students' perception, there seems to be a mutual need between the teachers and the students in term of error correction. In relation to this situation, Diab (2006, p. 2) comments "if teachers and students both understand the purpose of certain correction techniques and agree on their use, feedback is more likely to be productive". Based on this awareness the researcher believes that teachers should go on giving correction feedback. He also believes that correction feedback given by a teacher is not intended to show the power of a teacher nor to find errors of students. Al-Makhzoomi and Freihat (2001, p. 143) stated "this method ignores the real purpose of writing and focuses only on the negative aspects of a writing task, placing the student in such a position that he/she cannot write for fear of making mistakes". On the contrary, it is given for the sake of students' learning. What writing teachers should do is to find the best and the most suitable way of giving correction feedback which is appropriate and works for certain groups of students in certain contexts. One point that teachers should bear in mind is that giving feedback, including correction, is a part of their jobs. Brown (2001) and Hamalik (2004) claim that one of the characteristics of a good teacher is giving optimal feedback to students.

Additionally, the nature of writing itself necessitates intervention from the teacher. This is especially true for L2 learners whose first language system is very much different from the target language. Ferris (2005, p. 4) argues that "... L2 students, besides being developing writers, are still in the process of acquiring the L2 lexicon and morphological and syntactic systems". It is reasonable that "they need distinct and additional intervention from their writing teachers to make up these deficts and develop strategies for finding, correcting, and avoiding errors" (Ferris, 2005, p. 4). Ferris and Hedgcock claim:

> "teacher feedback also provides the opportunity for instruction to be tailored to the needs of individual students through face-to-face dialogue in teacher-student writing conferences and through the draft-response-revision cycle, during which teachers help students through their written commentary at various points" (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005, p. 185).

Since writing goes on through recursive processes of learning activities: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and writing final product, in the process of teaching and learning writing, the teacher, in addition to giving other forms of feedback, may correct the draft made by students so that they can revise them.

The second nature of writing is that writing appears in the form of a final product. In this context, Harmer (2004, p. 10) argues "there is a need to be absolutely clear and unambiguous". The clarity and the unambiguity of a piece of writing, in accordance with Chandrasegaran "can be achieved only when the target reader considers it so, that is, the reader thinks the text is 'right' for its purpose" (Chandrasegaran, 2002, p. 2). Since, in most cases, the reader(s) and the writer are far separated in terms of time and place, it is important to bear in mind that misunderstanding may not occur. Once misunderstanding appears, it is quite hard to fix it due to these two conditions.

The condition as described above makes the researcher interested in comparing the effectiveness of giving feedback on the quality of students' writing. According to Ferris (2005) feedback may be categorized into two kinds: direct feedback and indirect feedback. The first kind refers to the way of giving feedback in which a teacher simply corrects the incorrect use of the language.

There were three kinds of indirect feedback used in this study, namely: coded-correction feedback (CCF), non-coded correction feedback (NCCF) and sample end comment (SEC). CCF which is sometimes called as error identification is used with the assumption that by being helped by the availability of codes such as GR to indicate there is an error in grammar, or VOC to indicate there is an error in vocabulary, or WO to indicate there is an error in word order, or other codes to indicate other errors, it is assumed that the learners will be able to connect their memory to the area indicated by the code. Their prior knowledge is supposed to guide them to come to the right correction. This is in line with Krashen's (1985) Monitor Theory which claims that if the learners know the rule, they will be able to correct the incorrect production of language the performer must be consciously concerned about; he or she must know the rule. CCF is one form of indirect feedback.

The other form of indirect correction feedback is non-coded correction feedback (NCCF), also known as error location. In correcting the errors, the researcher uses underlining, circling, or question marks - rather than codes to indicate that an error is made in the writing, and the learners should correct it. However, because it is absent of any code, in order to be able to correct the incorrect performance of the language, the learners should find out what kind of error was made by themselves and be responsible to correct it. Of course, this kind of correction feedback is assumed to be more difficult than the first because the learners not only have to revise the errors but also have to find out what kind of errors they have made before they are able to revise the errors.

The last feedback is sample end comment (SEC). In this feedback, the researcher gives some hints and some comments on the errors they have made and at the same time asks the students to find out other errors in the text and correct them. This kind of error correction is quite similar to NCCF in the sense that an error has occurred in the hinted word or phrase. The difference is that the hints given are just for a small part of the text as sample. For the rest of errors that might occur, it is the responsibility of the learners to find out and correct them. That is why this is kind of correction feedback is assumed to be more complicated.

The reason to choose indirect correction as treatment in this study is that it forces learners to be more reflective and analytic than direct feedback (Ferris, 2005). Additionally, the subjects of this study are advanced students. As advanced students and helped by their language proficiency, they are assumed to be able to monitor any deviance found in their own writing and at the same time will be able to correct them altogether. There are two reasons why they are supposed to be able to correct any error or mistake found in their writing. First, in addition to attending a series of writing courses, they have also attended some supporting courses such as vocabulary and grammar in formal instruction classes. The formal classes they have attended play a very significant role in developing their language proficiency. Further impact of this language proficiency is that it gives benefit for their ability in writing English. Zare-ee (2011) found that the participants with higher EFL proficiency scores produced texts of significantly better quality. This is similar to what Ellis (2001) found that formal instruction shows that overall scores improved by 11 per cent from pre- to post-test compared to control group which did not receive any instruction in these features, which improved by only 3 per cent. Second,

they have passed pre-requisite courses which implies that at least they have already had adequate bases for correcting errors or mistakes.

This study is especially important when related to one of the recommendations made by Ferris (2004) who asked the next researcher to find out the impact of different error types on the student progress in accuracy. By knowing the result of this research the teacher teaching writing will be informed which method of correction results better, and they may consider what kind of correction feedback and how the correction feedback given works well.

The pupose of this study is to investigate different effects of different correction feedback on students' writing quality. Further comparison may be conducted between groups if overall there is a main significant difference between the different correction feedback.

Research Methods

The design employed in this study is a true experimental. The choice of this method is that this research aims at finding cause and effect relationship (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006). The cause is the correction feedback given as independent variables (X) and the quality of students' writing as dependent variable (Y). There are three variations of the independent variable employed to three different groups of students in this experiment; sample end comment (SEC) feedback, coded-correction (CC) feedback, and non-coded correction (NCC) feedback.

To minimize the intervening variables that might affect the result of the study a number of actions were taken. The subjects were randomly selected and assigned in three different groups (A1, A2, and A3); the conditions under which the study occurred– such as the way(s) the treatment was/were implemented, and the way(s) in which the data were collected were also made constant. It is expected that no extraneous variables may affect the internal validity of the study.

The subjects of this study were English Department students taking Writing IV course. 120 students were taking Writing IV course: 54 students in Regular A and 65 students in Regular B. Both groups of students had quite similar conditions; they had passed lower writing courses required before taking Writing IV course such as: Writing I, II, and III, Structure I, II, III, Vocabulary I, and II, Reading I, II, and III. But for the purpose of the study, the researcher just chose the students in Regular A. Students in Regular A was selected as the subjects of this study because they were admitted to the university based on the standard national university entrance test (SNMPTN). Since their admission to the university was through the same test, they were believed to be more homogeneous in terms of academic proficiency. The admission of Regular B students, on the other hand, was conducted through two modes of test: written test and oral test. The test items and the administration of the two tests were made and conducted locally. Since the tests were made and administered locally it was believed to be less standardized. Additionally, Regular A students were studying their courses, including Writing courses, in the morning while Regular B students were studying their courses in the afternoon. The difference in schedule was also assumed to affect the result of their learning. Students in Regular A were, therefore, chosen as the subjects of the study.

These students were then randomly chosen and assigned into three different classes: group A1 (19 students) , A2 (17 students) , and A3 (18 students). The three groups were then randomly assigned to three different kinds of feedback: coded correction feedback (CCF) for A2, non-coded correction feedback (NCCF) for A3; and end sample comment (SEC) feedback for A1.

Before the treatment all the students were assigned to write an essay to be scored . Group A1 (SEC) was assigned to write the first expository essay about *The Importance of Education for*

Indonesian Citizens (Appendix 4a). Group A2 (CCF) was assigned to write about *The importance of English in Global Era* (Appendix 4b). Group A3 (NCCF) was assigned to write about *The Importance of Computer in Information Era* (Appendix 4c).

For the treatment, each of the students in their group was assigned to write an essay, each essay was then given correction feedbacks, the students were assigned to revise their essay based on the feedbacks, and resubmit their revised essay the following week to be scored by the researcher. This practice was repeated four times.

The students in group A1 (SEC) were assigned to write the second expository essay about *The de-limitation of high school graduates majoring in social sciences (IPS) in continuing their study to a medical school*. After they finished writing the second essay, SEC feedback was given to an individual student's writing. Based on the feedback given, one week later, the students had to revise their writing and resubmit the writing to the researcher. They were then assigned to write the third expository essay about *The Use of English as the Only Medium of Instruction in the Teaching and Learning English*. After the students finished writing the third essay, SEC feedback was given again to an individual student's writing. Based on the feedback given, one week later, the students had to revise their writing and submit it to the researcher. Again, they were assigned to write the fourth expository essay about *Simplifying the conditions of taking courses in the English Department of Lambung Mangkurat University*. SEC feedback was again given to an individual student's writing. Based on the feedback given, one week later, the students had to revise their writing and submit it to the researcher.

The students in group A2 (CCF) were given the same treatment with different correction feedback. They were assigned to write the second essay about *The de-limitation of high school graduates majoring in language in continuing their study to a medical school*. They had to revise their essay after being given CCF. For the third essay they had to write about *The Use of Indonesian as the Medium of Instruction in the Teaching and Learning English*. Again, they had to revise their essay after being given CCF. For the fourth essay, they were assigned to write about *Simplifying the Conditions of Becoming Students of English Department*. Again, they had to revise their essay after being given CCF

The same treatment was given to the students in group A3 with NCC feedback. For the second expository essay, they were assigned to write about *The De-limitation of High School Graduates from Vocational High School (SMK) in Continuing their Study to a Medical School*. They had to revise their essay after being given NCC feedback. For the third expository essay they were assigned to write about *The balanced use of English and Indonesian as the Medium of Instruction in the Teaching and Learning English*. Again, they had to revise their essay after being given NCC feedback. Then, they were assigned to write the fourth expository essay about *Simplifying the conditions of becoming English Teachers*. Again they had to revise their essay after being given NCC feedback.

To assess the students' achievement in writing expository essays, each of the students was assigned to write the fifth essay. The students in group A1 were assigned to write the fifth expository essay about *The Punishment for People Smoking in Public Places*. The students in group A2 were assigned to write the fifth expository essay about *The Punishment for People Drinking Alcohol in Public Places*. The students in group A3 were assigned to write the fifth expository essay about *The Punishment for People Making Trouble in Public Places.*

The experimental treatment required each student to produce five different expository essays. For all the assignments, the direction, the type of essay to be written, the length of the essay, the time allotment, and the aspects of writing to be scored were made the same. The only

difference was the topics they had to write in each week for each group. The first three writing assignments were piloted to 26 students of English Department, Islamic State University (UIN) Malik Ibrahim Malang on May 3, 2011. The piloting students were asked to judge whether the topics the students should write were easy, quite easy, quite difficult, and difficult. Besides, they were also asked to give their comment(s) on the writing assignment topics. Most of the piloting students responded that the topics were quite easy.

Analytic scoring technique was used to score the essays, covering content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. The same rating was applied for each component, ranging from 5 for the highest to 1 for the lowest with different weighting; 5x for content, 5x for organization, 7x for language use, 2x for vocabulary, and 1x for mechanics.

Some training was conducted to get reliable scores between the raters. If the scores from the raters differ < 20 points (in the range of 10 - 100) it was tolerable. Nevertheless, if the difference was ≥ 20, there should be re-assessment by the two raters. If the difference was still ≥ 20, assessment by the third rater should be done. The final score agreed was the combination of the three scores given by the raters divided by three. To guide the researcher and the rater(s) to give score to students' writing, a scoring rubric was used. See Table 1

Table 1. *Scoring Rubric for Students' Writing*

No	Component	Range of scores	Weighting	Maximum Score
1	Content	1- 5	5	25
2	Organization	1- 5	5	25
3	Language use	1- 5	7	35
4	Vocabulary	1- 5	2	10
5	Mechanics	1 - 5	1	5
	Total Score		$\sum X =$	100

Table 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 present descriptors used in the process of scoring the content.

Table 2. *Scoring Rubric for Content*

Score	Descriptors
1	the essay is not related to the topic chosen and was not developed either
2	the essay is closely related to the topic chosen but was poorly developed
3	the essay is closely related to the topic chosen and thoroughly developed
4	the essay is related to the topic chosen but was not thoroughly developed;
5	the essay is related to the topic chosen and was thoroughly developed;

Table 3. *Scoring Rubric for Organization*

Score	Descriptors
1	the essay has no paragraphing and is poorly organized
2	the essay has only an introductory paragraph and content paragraph but does not have a concluding paragraph where the shift from one paragraph to the other paragraph does not move smoothly

3	the essay has only an introductory paragraph and a content paragraph, but does not have a concluding paragraph though the shift from one paragraph to another paragraph moves smoothly
4	the essay consists of an introductory paragraph, content paragraph, but the shift from one paragraph to another paragraph does not move smoothly
5	the essay has an introductory paragraph, content paragraph and concluding paragraph, and the shift from one paragraph to an other paragraph moves smoothly

Table 4. *Scoring Rubric for Language Use*

Score	Descriptors
1	there is a fatal deviation in the essay in using tenses and in choosing part of speech and in the use of word order.
2	there is a slight deviation in the essay in using tenses and in choosing parts of speech, but no deviation in word order.
3	there is a slight deviation in the essay in using tenses and in choosing a word based on its part of speech, but no deviation in the use of word order
4	there is a slight deviation in the essay in using tenses, no deviation in choosing a word based on its parts of speech and no deviation in the use of word order
5	there is no deviation in the essay in using tenses, in choosing a word based on its parts of speech, and in the use of word order

Table 5. *Scoring Rubric for Choice of Words*

Score	Descriptors
1	inappropriate use of the word, repeated use of the same word, and no use of idiomatic expression is found in the essay
2	appropriate use of word choice, use the same word repeatedly and the use of one idiomatic expression is identified in the essay
3	appropriate use of word choice, various words used to refer to the same thing, and the use of one idiomatic expression is detected in the essay
4	appropriate use of word choice, various words used to refer to the same thing, and the use of two idiomatic expressions is encountered in the essay
5	appropriate use of word choice, various words used to refer the same thing, and the use of three to four idiomatic expressions is available in the essay

Table 6. *Scoring Rubric for Mechanics*

Score	Descriptors
1	more than seven errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization in the essay.
2	five to six errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization in the essay
3	three to four errors in spelling, punctuation or spelling in the essay

4	one or two errors in spelling, punctuation or capitalization in the essay
5	no error in spelling, punctuation or capitalization in the essay

The consideration to give different weight for each component is that each component has different degree of complexities. Content, for instance, was weighted 5x because it is very much influenced by the ability of the writer to organize the topic so that the unity of the content will exist. The ability to organize ideas so that the flow of ideas between sentences and between paragaphs runs smoothly plays important role. That is why the second component, i.e. organization, was also weighted 5x. The third ability is related to language use. Since this component is considered the most crucial one, as revealed by some studies presented previously, this component was weighted 7x. The fourth component which is also weighted is vocabulary. However, since the subjects of this study were in their latest semester, they were assumed to have adequate vocabulary during their study. That is why this component was just weighted 2x. Whereas, the fifth component, i.e. mechanics was only weighted 1x. The reason for giving that weight for this component is that the students were assumed to have been familiar with such things: punctuation, capitalization, and spelling not only in English classes but also in other courses other than English in their institution. In fact, they have already been introduced to the mechanics since they were in high schools.

Research Findings

This result of the analysis using One-Way Anova shows that there is no significant difference between the three groups (See Table 7). This means that each of the three treatments may be equally effective but no one of them is more effective than the other.

Table 7. *The Result of Analysis Using One-Way ANOVA*

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	114.823	2	57.411	.762	.472
Within Groups	3842.644	51	75.346		
Total	3957.467	53			

Discussion

The result of the research shows no significant difference in effectiveness between the three kinds of error correction feedback to the students' writing quality. It seems to agree with Truscott (1996) who claims that grammar correction has no place in writing and therefore should be abandoned. Truscott (2007) confirms his claims with empirical evidence from his research that within 95% level of confidence, correction has no better than a small beneficial effect on accuracy, that any beneficial effects are too small to even qualify as small effects. It also confirms Hendrickson (1981)'s study which revealed that there was no significant differencefound between the effect of comprehensive correction and correction of global errors. The finding of this study also confirms Lalande (1982)'s study that intermediate German students at U.S. universities who received coded correction and used error logs to track their errors showed no significant difference in their achievement than those who received explicit correction without logs.

Some plausible explanations can be offered to understand this result. The first plausible explanation is that the learning time may not be sufficient to improve students' writing skill.

Lewis (2002) suggests that the feedback given provides useful information to students; it provides students with advice about learning, it provides students with language input, it is a form of motivation, and it can lead students towards autonomy. However, giving feedback in the form of error correction requires further relevant learning to take place before they can be self-corrected. Hyland and Hyland (2006) confirms that the role of feedback is widely seen as crucial for both encouraging and consolidating learning in education. The result of learning encouragement and consolidation, of course, cannot be observed directly in a short time. In this study, the subjects did not have enough time to understand the error correction feedback.

The second plausible explanation is that the students may not be well informed enough about some of the topics they were assigned to write and therefore may not be interested enough to write about the topic. Their writing about familiar topics, e.g. *The Importance of Computer in the Information Era*, and *The importance of English in Global Era* were better than their writing about *The De-limitation of High School Graduates from Vocational Senior High School* and *Simplifying the Conditions of Becoming English Teachers*. If they had been assigned to write about topics which were interesting enough for them to write, their writing could have been better.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of this study and the discussion, several conclusions can be drawn. The first empirical conclusion is that Sample Error Correction (SEC) feedback, Coded Correction Feedback (CCF), and Non-Coded Correction Feedback (NCCF) are equally effective, or no one of the three is more effective that the others.

The reason why no one of the three techniques of error correction feedback is more effective than the others could be because the effects of error correction feedback can not be observed in a too short time, or it can be observed much later after the treatment is given. The writing encouragement and consolidation resulted from error correction feedback, for example, may not be observable right away.

Recommendations

Based on the finding some suggestions are recommended. First, writing teachers can use any of the three techniques of error correction feedback for their writing classes interchangably. Second, since the major weaknesses of the students in the study were language use and vocabulary, by the help of their lecturers and other learning aids, it is strongly recommended for the students to improve their knowledge and skill and these two components of writing.

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