DO STUDENTS NEED TEACHER WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK?
A Case Study at Secondary School

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Abstract

This study was designed as a case study surveying thirteen students from secondary school as the research participants. The purpose of this current study is to explore ESL students' views toward the existence and the need of teacher written corrective feedback on their writing class. An open-ended questionnaire comprised seven questions adapted from Diab (2005) was employed to gather the data. The finding denotes that the participants have positive views toward written corrective feedback on their writing class even though some researchers, led by Truscott in 1996, believe that written corrective feedback is even harmful for the students. This result points to several pedagogical implications that would be discussed on the paper.

Keywords: Students' views, feedback, teacher written corrective feedback

Introduction

Historically, since the 1980s researcher and EFL teachers have investigated various types of feedback until in 2010s the growing body of researchers comes to explore which type of written corrective feedback is better than others and its advantages in classroom practice. Notwithstanding, the use of corrective feedback in students' writing has become the controversial issues among the practitioners as well as attracted substantial number of studies in few recent decades. These disputed issues actually concern with the explicit error correction, especially on whether such feedback correction could help students in improving their writing accuracy and alsotheir writing quality (Truscott, 1996; Ferris, 1999).

Relevant research generally implies that writing teachers should provide corrective feedback on content and organization (Nanni and Black, 2017). However, research pedagogy finds that teachers' feedback is more likely to focus on form rather than on content, organizational or other aspects (Lee, 2005). Furthermore, these corrective feedback issues actually arise two contradictory sides. One may argue that students writing requisite to be

corrected and the error should be identified on their writing process, while other side casts the doubt on the effectiveness of corrective feedback and claims that students' mistakes are natural language learning process; further, error correction could be harmful to students (Bitchener, Young & Cameroon, 2005). Despite those controversies about feedback correction, two factors remain clear. Firstly, writing teachers are continuing to believe in responding students error plays pivotal aspect to the improvement of students' writing (Hyland in Hyland and Hyland, 2014). Secondly, students are eager to receive teachers' corrective feedback on their writing and they continue to believe in they get advantages from corrective feedback (Leki, 1991; Diab, 2005; Lee, 2005).

In Indonesia, corrective feedback in writing is under-explored area by both the practitioners and the researchers. Some existed researchers commonly investigate the most effective type of corrective feedback in writing classroom (Kadarisman, et al., 2016; Tursina & Chuan, 2016), but examined two parties involved in the classroom practice, teachers and students, are yet to touch. By ascertaining Indonesian

secondary students' views regarding the corrective feedback provide by the teacher, this study tried to fill the gap in local writing research. It is actually important that some researches explored both teachers' and also students' views about corrective feedback to reveal the discrepancy regarding the views between them which may obstructthe successful language teaching and learning process.

Methodology

This current study employed qualitative data analysis in a case study aimed at exploring EFL students' views which principally involving the study of an issue, regarding the existence and the need of teacher written corrective feedback on their writing class, in exploration trough one case within a bounded system (Creswell, 2007). An open-ended questionnaire comprised seven questions adapted from Diab (2005) was used to gather the data. The participants were obtained from thirteen students from one of secondary school in academic year 2017/2018. The data were gathered on April to fully fill the questionnaire by using Google document questionnaire spreadsheet.

Review of Related Literature

In early study, Leki (1991) concerns on the students' perception regarding the error correction aims at helping them improving language acquisition through being aware of their needs and senses. Without considering the disputed issue from the researchers about whether the error correction is effective or not, surprisingly 91% students agree that error correction is important to their written work. Then, they were counted as 53%, 44%, 54%, 47%, 74%, and 65% of students agree that they would look carefully at the marks of error in grammar, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, organization and the ideas provided by teachers. The students further stated that doing something in response to their teachers' indications of errors was the best way to avoid making the same mistake again in the future.

Regarding to the corrective feedback provided by teacher, Lee (2005)reveals that students in her study tend to prefer teachers to mark error comprehensively and mark all of error rather few percent of errors made by students. In the further findings, the researcher finds that around 76.3% of the students prefer teachers use the error codes, although they also wish their teachers to correct for them and over half of the students also consider that error correction is the teachers' responsibility.

Diab (2005) explores not only students' views but also teacher's view regarding corrective feedback. For the teacher' views, teacher actually seemed to focus on grammar issues in general includingpunctuation, spelling, and clarity. In addition to grammar and sentence-level feedback, the teacher responded to content-level issues such as structure and organization, development,logic and consistency, attention to audience, and focus or thesisstatement, all of which were included in the instructor's checklist as shownin the following excerpt from the think-aloud protocol.While from students' view, students emphasized the importance of feedback and commentsin general and the relevance of grammar and error correction inparticular. They also claimed that both progress draft is also important as final draft and stated these corrections as their 'security blanket' in learning writing. In conclusion, the studentsin this study clearly believes in the effectiveness of such correction.

Findings and Discussion

1. Students' views in learning writing

Based on the questionnaire, students have various goals of learning writing in English. Notwithstanding, the finding indicates that over a half student agrees that they learn writing to have good communication when they need it, for instance is going abroad. Besides that, they claimed that they would be good in speaking since they learn writing. Furthermore, all of students actually agree that everyone could learn writing when they

practice to write regularly. Thus, they do concern to what teacher give to them when they got feedback in their writing practice by seeing what aspect should be corrected then trying how to correct it as the part of learning writing process.

2. Students' view on corrective feedback

In this part, students responded the questionnaire by stating feedback could be positive for them when the teacher could provide the constructive feedback. They mostly defined positive feedback as the error correction and/or comment that could motivate them to write better than before.

They acknowledged that teachers' comments are essential. For instance:

> Student 4 said, "Teacher' constructive comment makes me want to keep writing"

> Student 7 stated, "Teacher's correction gives me more spirit to do my task."

> Student 9 said, "The more mistakes I got, the more I am triggered to achieve perfect writing".

3. Feedback on a work in initial versus feedback final draft

Most of the students did make the distinction between looking at feedback on initial draft and looking it on final draft. However, they tend to look at the initial draft as their priority since initial draft has the crucial thing to be considered, such as the framework of their writing. Nevertheless, some students stated that they concerned on both initial and final draft since they play equal important process. For instance:

> Students 2 said "No. I always focus on the progress/initial draft because therein lies the "important" part"

> Student 9 said "No. Because the initial draft is different with final draft. We could not see it in the same way".

> Students 11 said "No. I prefer to look at the final draft, because I think the statement on the final draft is more interesting to respond".

4. The need for error correction

Students revealed that there might indeed be such a need for this "security blanket" since they thought that learning to write in Indonesian language is different with learning to write in English. They further claimed that the differences might lay on the spelling, vocabulary, and grammar that make their writing supposed to be corrected in order to have good writing skill. Thus, they obviously believe in the effectiveness of such correction. For instance:

> According to Student 8, "I am happy if the teacher corrects my works by telling me what and where my mistake is. So that I can learn more and improve my ability in writing".

Besides that, they tend to think that teacher written corrective feedback could motivate them in learning writing, for instance:

> Student 9: "I like if the teacher gives feedback and accompanied by the suggestion and also motivation to keep us more excited in learning writing".

Conclusion

Based on findings, students emphasized the importance of feedback on their writing class. Actually, it is essential that teachers become aware of their students' views on such issues, in addition to their becoming acquainted with students' specific views about feedback to writing. Since teachers are responsible to be aware of their students' views of what helps them progress and somehow to incorporate these perceptions into their teaching. Teachers mightconsidersetting aside class time to discuss with theirstudents both the methodologies they prefer andthe research evidence supporting those preferences.Language teachers might considerquestioning their students on what the studentsfeel has helped them most in their languagestudies, which teaching behaviors they find conduciveto their progress, and which seemdetrimental. Even if the teachers'

preferenceswill ultimately prevail (although they do not haveto), urging student input and reflection on theirlanguage learning experiences encourages themto take more responsibility for their learning andthereby, perhaps, results in better learning.

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