The Use of Written Corrective Feedback in SMKN 6 Jakarta Students’ English Writings

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Abstract

Students who live in a non-English-speaking country or EFL students often face difficulties in mastering English writing. The teachers need to fix it by giving written corrective feedback which would let the students know the linguistic errors they make in written production and improve from their errors. The aims of this research study are to find out what kind of error that EFL students usually make in English writing, the most common type(s) of WCF that teachers use, and the reason why teachers mostly use one type of WCF. This study was carried out by using Descriptive Analysis Qualitative Method since the results of this study were explained descriptively. The participants that were involved in this study are 20 students of tenth graders and 2 English teachers of SMKN 6 Jakarta. The instruments that were used in this study are Table Analysis (RQ1 & RQ2) and Interview (RQ3). In the end of the study, the results showed that Grammatical Error gained the highest number of errors found in the students’ assignments. The study also found that the English teachers frequently use Direct Correction to correct the students because it is easy, useful, and fast to use. It is suggested for the English teachers correct errors based on their contexts in the assignments and future researchers should also conduct cases about WCF which emphasizes the difference of writing errors that are produced by male and female students.

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INTRODUCTION

Corrective Feedback (CF) is feedback that is given by the teachers to let the students know the linguistic errors they make in oral and/or written production and improve from their errors. According to Karim & Nassaji (2019), written productions of EFL students are still a concern because of the quality that is shown. Therefore, written corrective feedback is suitable for this issue. Written corrective feedback is a
crucial teaching and learning tool in class. It is used to give feedback to students who have made written products, such as essay (Han & Hyland, 2019). The feedback can be direct correction, coded feedback, uncoded feedback, and marginal. Based on Wicaksono (2018), direct correction is an explicit type of feedback. The teacher points out which error the student makes and also provides the correction of the error. Coded feedback is not as explicit as direct correction. By using this type of feedback, the teacher only points out the location of the error but does not provide the correct form of it. Uncoded feedback is far different than the coded one. This feedback type requires the teacher to only highlight the errors that are found in their writings without providing any correction. Last, marginal is a more challenging type than the others. It requires the teacher to count how many errors the students make but they do not provide any correction or highlight the errors. Instead, the students need to analyze through their writings to find the errors and let them search the correct form by themselves. These would help the students be confident and improve themselves in English writing since EFL students mostly have anxiety while producing a written product.

The problem of this research study is how EFL students frequently make errors while writing in English. The linguistic errors could be in the spellings, grammar structures, or in other aspects that are yet to be discovered (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Sheen & Ellis, 2005). Teachers would do their best to correct and help the students to fix their errors. However, these students usually repeat their errors over and over again. Thus, the right Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) type might be needed by the teachers to correct the students and improve their English writing skills.

Karim (2013) has conducted a similar study to this current research. His study was conducted at an American university and took German students who studied there. The study conducted was about which CF is more effective; direct correction, underline CF, or underline + metalinguistic CF. The results showed how underline + metalinguistic CF helped them to understand what type of error they made and how to correct them. The metalinguistic made them find out the cause of the error, so they were able to fix it themselves.

Tanveer et al (2018) also conducted similar research by using quantitative method which requires them to divide the participants into two groups which are experimental and control group. Each group is provided with Oxford placement
tests. At the end of their study, they found that students in the experimental group who received explicit revision or feedback are the ones who most likely to be able to correct their errors in the future. Compared to those who received implicit feedback, i.e., the control group, they are still not able to correct their errors since they have no idea which error, they made.

The gap of this study is that it was conducted in a school named SMK Negeri 6 Jakarta which is a vocational high school in Jakarta, Indonesia. There has not been a research study conducted in this school before. Many other research studies also conducted research about the effectiveness of Written Corrective Feedback or Oral Corrective Feedback, such as a study conducted by Karim & Nassaji in 2019 about the effects of Written Corrective Feedback on students with explicit and implicit feedback. Meanwhile, this study focuses on the use of Written Corrective Feedback and the students’ errors in English writing. It is important to discuss because it might help the students to know how to correct themselves after the teacher gave them corrections whether it is explicit or implicit.

This study is mainly focused on written corrective feedback. This discussed about the errors that are usually made by EFL students while writing in English, the common use of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) in English class, and the reason why teachers use WCF. In this study, the researcher analyzed the case of written corrective feedback based on the research questions: 1) What kind/type of error that EFL students make in English writing? 2) What are the most common type(s) of WCF that teachers use in class? 3) Why do the teachers use that specific WCF?

The aims of this research study are: 1) To find out what kind of error that EFL students usually make in English writing; 2) To find out the most common type(s) of WCF that teachers use; 3) To find out the reason why teachers mostly use one type of WCF.

**METHOD**

This study was carried out by using Descriptive Analysis Qualitative Method since the results of this study were explained descriptively. For this method, the researcher went through three steps, which were identifying the errors, classifying the errors, and ranking the errors (Muhsin, 2016). After analyzing the errors, the researcher did the same three steps to analyze the teachers’ feedback. The researcher also
analyzed the teachers’ interview results by identifying and ranking the reasons why they often use a specific WCF type.

The participants that were involved in this study were 20 students of tenth graders and 2 English teachers of SMKN 6 Jakarta. Each teacher held several different classes. For that reason, the participants who provided the essays were divided into only 10 students for each class that the teachers were in charge of. The teachers were chosen because they were the ones who handled the students’ homework and the researcher was only able to communicate with the 2 out of 3 English teachers in SMKN 6 Jakarta. Meanwhile, these 20 students were chosen because of their lack in English writing based on their scores on their daily assignments or their huge number of errors in daily writing. Therefore, they would fit the criteria of this study to be analyzed (Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013). Only 20 students were chosen by the researcher due to limited time that this research was conducted.

This research study required to analyze the students’ English essays along with the teacher’s feedback and their preference in choosing the Written Corrective Feedback type, then the instruments that were used in this study are Table Analysis (RQ1 & RQ2) and Interview (RQ3). The table analysis was used to categorize the results of the essay analysis, feedback analysis, and interview answers. The interview is a structured one since the researcher expects to get explicit and detailed information about the WCF that they use. Structured interview is more organized, so the researcher knows what to ask to the interviewee and gets the reliable answers that they need to put as the results (Suharyanti & Fauziati, 2020).

The interview questions below are adapted from Kiliçkaya (2022):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you know any type of Written Corrective Feedback?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Which WCF type do you often use in class to correct the students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Which WCF that is the most useful to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Why do you use that WCF type?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions are adapted from Kiliçkaya (2022) because his questions are related to WCF in general and the answers to these questions are the results of this
The study's research questions. The first question is to confirm whether the participants already have a knowledge of any type of Written Corrective Feedback or not. The second question is to know which type that they like to use to correct the students in class. Although the third question might sound similar to the second one, this question is to know which type of WCF that is the most useful or helpful to the participants while they are correcting the students' works. Last but not least, the fourth question is to find out the reason why the participants use one specific WCF type to correct the students. Furthermore, the questions provided would answer the second and third research questions.

RESULT

After collecting the students' works, the researcher analyzed the students' errors in English writings first. The assignments were collected were Recount Text which uses past tense as the grammar structure because it is retelling about past events and/or experiences. There were 2 classes of tenth graders that were picked to provide their assignments which were Multimedia and Accountancy. The researcher chose 10 people randomly in both Multimedia and Accountancy classes which made it 20 students in total. These 20 students were chosen because they fulfilled the criteria that the researcher was looking for which was their lack in English writing. The results of the analysis are provided in the table below which will answer the first research question that asks What kind/type of error that EFL students make in English writing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Number of Mistakes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical Error</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling Error</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Vocabulary</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Error</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1. Number of Errors

The chart above shows the number of errors that have been found in the students’ essay works. It proves that the students make all 4 types of errors in English writing which are Article Error, Grammatical Error, Lack of Vocabulary, and Spelling Error. The result shows that Grammatical Error has the highest number than the other errors. Out of 87 errors that are found in the students’ essays, there are 65 of grammatical errors that have been done by the students. Meanwhile, Spelling Error becomes the second highest number of errors with 10 of errors in total. The rest of the
errors such as Lack of Vocabulary and Article Error have the same number which is 6 in total.

The following table shows the results of the most common WCF type that is used by the teachers. This result is the answer to the second research question which asks *What are the most common type(s) of WCF that teachers use in class?*

**Chart 2. Common Type(s) of WCF**

The chart above shows that English teachers in SMKN 6 Jakarta like to use Direct Correction to correct the students, which counts for 100%. Meanwhile, the rest of the other types received 0% total of teachers using those 3 types. None of them seemed to use Coded Feedback, Uncoded Feedback, or Marginal to assess the assignments.

Then, the last following result is the answer to the third research question which asks *Why do the teachers use that specific WCF?*

**Chart 3. Reasons**

The chart above shows that English teachers in SMKN 6 Jakarta like to use Direct Correction to correct the students, which counts for 100%. Meanwhile, the rest of the other types received 0% total of teachers using those 3 types. None of them seemed to use Coded Feedback, Uncoded Feedback, or Marginal to assess the assignments.

Then, the last following result is the answer to the third research question which asks *Why do the teachers use that specific WCF?*
Based on the teachers’ interviews, teachers mostly use Direct Correction because of the same reasons that were mentioned in the chart. Direct Correction is proved to be easy because of its practicality and effectivity. It is easy because it is the most common way to correct the students and the teachers use it frequently to correct the students in class (Dabboub, 2019). It is also useful because it may improve the students’ knowledge in English writing because it gives explicit feedback, so the students may know their own errors and how to write the correct writing since they easily perceive things explicitly rather than implicitly (Reynolds & Kao, 2021). This type is also considered fast because it only requires the teachers to revise the works by marking and giving the correct answers (Banaruee et al., 2018). Both of the teachers agreed that Direct Correction is easy and useful to correct the students. However, although they confirmed that it is the fastest way to correct the students, Teacher 1 added a statement outside the interview session that using Direct Correction also takes time because they need to read them carefully and find the errors to give them the correct answers.

DISCUSSION

This section discussed about the findings that have been found in the previous section. These discussions are the answers to the research questions to this study. Types of errors section is the answer to the first research question, common use of WCF types section is the answer to the second research question, and reasons why teachers use certain WCF types section is the answer to the third research question. The findings show that the most frequent error that students make is grammatical error. The findings also show that English teachers of SMKN 6 Jakarta mostly use Direct Correction because it is an easy, useful, and fast way to correct the students.

Types of Errors Found in Students’ English Essays

a) Grammatical Error

Based on Chart 1, Grammatical Error received 65 in total as the results which is also the highest result out of the other error types. According to Fengjie (2016), grammatical error is an inaccuracy of grammar structure or formula that is used by the writer. The samples of the whole actual grammatical errors data can be seen in the table below.
Excerpt 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>&quot;...it was very cool, everyone play, no one mocks each other...&quot;</td>
<td>It should be “played” and “mocked” because it is in Past Tense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>&quot;We leave from home by bus.&quot;</td>
<td>It should be “left.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>&quot;From the house to the station it takes approximately 30 minutes by car.”</td>
<td>It should be &quot;took.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the teachers’ reports, the students frequently make grammatical errors because they are still inconsistent in using the tenses (as in Past Tense, Present Tense, Future Tense, etc.). They are still unsure about which word or sentence they should use in Past Tense. Hence, they tend to mix either Past Tense or Present Tense or other tenses when they produce a sentence. As can be seen in the excerpt above, the students tend to use Present Tense when they should be using Past Tense instead since they are writing Recount Text. Recount text is a type of text that retells the writer’s past events or experiences (Husna & Multazim, 2019).

b) Spelling Error

Spelling Error received 10 in total of errors. According to Khider & Othman (2017), spelling error is a typo that the writer makes because they either write too fast or they just write it based on what they remember as a non-English-speaker which is not always accurate. The samples of the actual spelling error data can be seen in the table below.

Excerpt 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>“Last Friday night, I went to home and changed my clothes.”</td>
<td>It should be “clothes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>“…and a life that cares for each other.”</td>
<td>It should be “other.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the results, the students tend to make typos in English writings because they are mostly not familiar with the spellings of the words they are writing. However, they are used to the pronunciations. It means that they can pronounce those words, but they do not know how to spell them.

### c) Lack of Vocabulary

As for the vocabulary, it received 6 in total of errors. According to Farooq et al (2012), lack of vocabulary refers to the writer’s lack of familiarity in English words which leads them to not use them properly in a sentence. The samples of the actual lack of vocabulary data can be seen in the table below.

**Excerpt 3.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>“…I’m bored all alone in the same rutinity.”</td>
<td>The word “rutinity” does not exist. It should use “routine” instead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>“I went to Pekalongan by bus. I’m from Jakarta at 6 pm.”</td>
<td>Wrong choice of words. It should be “I departed from Jakarta…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>“We looked the bus that took Indonesian badminton team players.”</td>
<td>Wrong choice of word. Based on the context, it should be “saw.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the teachers’ reports, they are lacking their vocabulary because they are still translating their native language (Bahasa Indonesia) to English using a
translating machine, so the English may not always be accurate. They also might not be aware of other appropriate words to use in the sentences.

d) Article Error

Article Error is one of the smallest number of errors that have been found in the students' essays. It only received 6 in total. According to Alhaysony (2012), article error is an error found in a singular or a plural form of a sentence. The samples of the actual article error data can be seen in the table below.

**Excerpt 4.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>“…Tanah Lot Bali the one of the most sacred temples…”</td>
<td>There should not be an article for this context. It should be replaced with “is” instead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>“From the house to the station it takes approximately 30 minutes by car.”</td>
<td>There should not be an article for this context. It should be replaced with “my” instead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>“My brother want to get some photos by girl tourist who visit Kuta Beach.”</td>
<td>Missing an article which is “a” and the correct sentence would be “by a girl.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the results, the students seemed to be confused of when to use an article. They used articles for sentences that do not need an article, but they did not use articles for sentences that actually need an article.

**Common Use of WCF Types**

The most common WCF type that is used by the teachers in SMKN 6 Jakarta is Direct Correction. Teacher 1 stated that she often uses Direct Correction to correct the students. Teacher 1 crosses the wrong words and writes down the correct words
to make the students learn from their errors. However, she does not give answers to all of them which means that she only gives the correct answers to one or more questions and then she gives the students a chance to think about the other errors. It is still considered to be Direct Correction because the teacher still gives the correct answers directly and not let the students think on their own.

Teacher 2 also uses Direct Correction as her preferable Written Corrective Feedback type. Teacher 2 uses it to correct her students’ work by highlighting the wrong answers and providing the correct answers. Different from the first teacher, Teacher 2 corrects every wrong answer she could find so that the students can easily know which ones are their errors.

**Reasons Why Teachers Use Certain Written Corrective Feedback Type**

The result on Chart 3 shows that both of the English teachers mostly use Direct Correction. Teacher 1 stated that Direct Correction is the most useful and easiest type of WCF to use to correct the students. Direct Correction can make the students be aware of the errors they should not make while writing in English. The teacher helps them to be aware of those errors by discussing their previous assignments in class. That way, all of the students will also gain knowledge about those errors and know that they should not write the same errors.

Teacher 2 also stated that Direct Correction is easy, useful, and fast to use in class because she can provide the correct answers just by highlighting the wrong answers and then correct them. It is also useful because it can help the students to find out their errors more easily.

Based on the findings above, Direct Correction is the most preferred type of WCF for the English teachers in SMKN 6 Jakarta. Not only it is easy and common for teachers to use, but it is also useful for the students because they can learn and not repeat the same errors when they produce an English essay. These results are necessary because it proves that Direct Correction is indeed useful and teachers are using it on their daily corrections.

**CONCLUSION**

To sum up, the results of this study show that EFL students, especially students of SMKN 6 Jakarta, frequently make errors in grammar when writing in English. Although the teachers may have explained about the procedures in producing a
Recount Text, they still cannot differentiate the tenses and use them properly. Some of them still use Present Tense when they should be using Past Tense because recount texts are telling the readers about the writer’s past experiences.

On the other side, they also make errors in vocabulary. Due to the differences in Bahasa Indonesia and English sentence structures, they usually just translate their words, but they do not pay attention to the structures. This error can be seen on Excerpt 3, Number 2. In Bahasa Indonesia, the sentence goes “Saya berangkat dari Jakarta jam 6” and that sentence should have been translated to “I departed from Jakarta at 6 P.M” in English. However, they translated their sentence literally, so the translation may not sound natural in English. Some Indonesian people call this phenomenon as Indoglish because they say or write English sentences in Bahasa Indonesia structure which is not fully accurate to use.

Other than that, students make errors in spellings and articles, too. In the essays they have written, they tend to use articles that are not needed in the sentence. They also often misspell some English words because they are not familiar with the spellings, but they mostly know how to pronounce those words. This error can be seen on Excerpt 2, Number 1 which shows how the student misspells the word “clothes” as “clost” because the word is pronounced that way. Because of that, the student may have thought that that is the correct way to spell it.

The results have also found that the common type of WCF that is mostly used by the English teachers of SMKN 6 Jakarta is Direct Correction. The teachers use Direct Correction because they can simply highlight or strikethrough the wrong answers and then provide the correct answers below or above it.

Direct Correction is also proven to be an easy, useful, and fast way to correct the students’ English essays. Based on Teacher 1’s statement, it is easy and useful because students can comprehend explicit feedback through direct corrections clearly rather than implicit feedback through coded/uncoded feedback and marginal. Therefore, the students do not need to revise on their own since the teachers’ feedback is given on their notebooks already. Through this way, the students can enhance their English knowledge without having to search on their own because they might still not understand one or two things even if they do so. Moreover, direct correction is a fast method to correct the students’ writings because it only takes to read the text, then highlight/strikethrough the wrong word and/or sentence, and then provide the answers.
Based on the overall findings, this study’s results are essential because it contains necessary information about WCF. This information can be useful to people, especially teachers, because it may help them know how to correct the students more properly. It may also help the students to know the errors they make and notice the teachers’ corrections more easily.

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Karim, K. (2013). The effects of direct and indirect written corrective feedback (CF) on English-as- a-second- language (ESL) students’ revision accuracy and writing skills.


