TEACHER'S WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON LANGUAGE FEATURES ON STUDENTS' WRITING

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate the type of corrective feedback used by a teacher on students' writing. The subjects of the study were twelve students of tenth graders of a private senior high school in Ponorogo selected based on pre-determined set criteria. The study used a qualitative method and the sources of data collected in this study were the teacher's written corrective feedback on language features which focused on three categories of errors: subject-verb agreement, word choice, and sentence structure in the students' descriptive texts. The data gathered were processed by analyzing and interpreting the teacher's written corrective feedback using Ellis's typologies of corrective feedback (2009) namely: direct, indirect, and metalinguistic corrective feedback.

The result of the study shows that the type of corrective used by the MAN 2 Ponorogo teacher to correct the students' descriptive writing was typology corrective feedback proposed by Ellis (2009). The corrective feedbacks used by the teacher were as many as 108 occurrences in total. The occurrences of direct corrective feedbacks were 37 (40,65%) on subject verb agreement errors, 20 (21,98%) word choices, and 34 (37,37%) sentence structures, while the indirect corrective feedback were 3 (21,42%) subject verb errors, 4 (28,58%) word choices, and 7 (50%) sentence structures, and metalinguistic on subject verb errors, word choices, and sentence structures used by the teacher was only 1 (3,33%) of each. It was later concluded that the type of corrective feedback mostly used by the

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teacher in revising their students' grammatical errors was direct corrective feedback.

Keywords: corrective feedback, language features, direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, metaliguistic corrective feedback.

INTRODUCTION

The main role had by teachers of writing is to help the students improve their writing proficiency according to their competence. Students who learn English as a foreign language commonly make errors in their writings. This is because they lack of grammar concepts. The teachers could help the students by correcting the students' writing assignment. One of the most commonly used techniques used by teachers in teaching writing is providing feedback on students' writing assignment which is one main method of giving responses by the teachers. Hyland (1998) states that giving an effective feedback is a central concern for many teachers of writing and an important area for both L1 and L2 writing research.

Feedback is a teacher's behavior to help the students who get difficulties in the learning process by responding to the students' assignment. Feedback contains the teacher' information given to the learners regarding their performance of the learning task. It is usually complied with the objective of improving their performance (Brookhart, 2008). However, a crucial question is what this feedback should be like. A feedback type commonly used by teachers is written corrective feedback: the marking of students' errors by the teacher on the text and providing the correct forms.

Likewise, the students need feedback on their assignment to create good writing. The corrective feedback is important because it is one of the effective ways in giving feedback on students' writing assignment. Through corrective feedback, the teacher knows the development of the

students' writing. Teachers' corrective feedback could cover all aspects of writing, including content, organization, and language use.

In recent years, corrective feedback has been applied by many researchers. The first was Beuningen and Kuiken (2008) who investigated the effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedback. Later, Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) analyzed the preference of different types and amount of corrective feedback for L2 writing. The third research was conducted by Tran (2013) who attempted to learn about ways to treat student's written errors. In the three related studies above, the researchers only focused on the investigation of the effectiveness of corrective feedback. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the corrective feedback in language features used on students' writing errors.

METHODS

The design of this study was qualitative research. The character of this research study was describing, studying, and experimenting the phenomenon, and emphasizing natural settings, understandings, verbal narratives, and flexible design as well (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001).

The subjects of this study were tenth graders of a private senior high school in Ponorogo. They were in two Social classes with Class A (N=20) and Class B (N=26). They were all taught by one teacher. The students' scores helped the researcher identify the students' scores ranging from the highest, average, to the lowest. One criterion in selecting the subjects was based on the students' scores. They were later classified into three categories high (86-100), average (81-85), and low (61-80). Later, the researcher randomly selected two students for each criteria score.

Corrective feedback in language features used by the teacher in their students' descriptive text was used as the data in this study. While the unit of analysis for this study was corrective feedback on subject-verb errors, words choice, and sentence structure proposed by Ferris & Robert (2001).

In analyzing the teachers' written corrective feedback, the researcher acted as the research instrument to check the students' essay. Thus, the researcher identified and made code or symbol to each type of errors in the students' writing which contained language features as proposed by Ferris and Roberts (2001).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study identified the corrective feedback in language features given to the students' writing. The researcher only focused on the use of corrective feedback in language features which included subject-verb errors, word choice, and sentence structure errors. The following table presents the types of written corrective feedback on language features in students' writing used by the teacher.

Table 1

The Frequency of Types of Corrective Feedback used by the Teacher

Class's Code	Types of Corrective Feedback									TOTAL
	Direct			Indirect			Metalinguistic			
	sv	wc	ss	sv	wc	ss	sv	wc	ss	
A	16	11	19	1	1	3	1	1	0	
B	21	9	15	2	3	4	0	0	1	
TOTAL	37	20	34	3	4	7	1	1	1	
	91			14			3			108
%	84,25%			12,97%			2,78%			100%

Note:

sv : subject-verb   wc : word choice   ss : sentence structure

Table 1 above shows the details of the corrective feedback used by the teacher on the students' writing assignment as many as 108 feedbacks in total. Additionally, the teacher predominantly used direct corrective feedback. The occurrences of direct corrective feedbacks were 37 (40,655%) on verb errors, 20 (21,98%) on word choices, and 34 (37,37%) on sentence structures, while for the indirect corrective feedback, the teacher employed 3 (21,42%) on subject verb errors, 4 (28,58%) on word choices, and 7 (50%) on sentence structures, while metalinguistic on subject verb errors, word choice, and sentence structure used by the teacher were only 1 (33,33%) for each grammar point. However, metalinguistic was in the lowest position among other percentages because it was rarely used in the written corrective feedback.

Having identified and displayed the different percentages among the corrective feedback used by the teacher on students' writing assignment, the researcher presents the results of data analysis by giving examples of types of corrective feedback in language features. The language features in the writing text assignment included subject verb errors, word choice, and sentence structure. Henceforth, each type of corrective feedback in language features is described as follows.

Direct corrective feedback used. The type of corrective feedback used by the teacher most of the time was direct corrective feedback. In this type, the teacher did not only locate and indicate the presence of errors but also provided the correct forms of their errors to let the students know the correct forms of their errors. Direct corrective feedback was really helpful for the students to revise their errors. Giving direct corrective feedback could resolve complex errors in their writing.

However, direct corrective feedback also gave disadvantages to the students. The students were lazy to think deeply how to revise their errors. Direct corrective feedback only provided information or teacher's correction above or below the errors. The following Table 2 shows the result of direct corrective feedback used by the teacher.

Table 2

Direct Corrective Feedback used by the Teacher

Total corrective feedback	Total number of direct corrective feedback	Percentage
108	91	84,25%

Table 2 above presents the total number of direct corrective feedback used by the teacher in students' descriptive writing assignment was 91 (84,25%). It can be seen that the teacher mostly used this type to correct their students' writing. Therefore, Table 3 presents the frequency of direct corrective feedback.

Table 3

The Frequency of Direct Corrective Feedback

Direct Corrective Feedback	Language features			Total
	sv	Wc	ss	
	37	20	34	91
Percentage	40,65%	21,98%	37,37%	100%

Table 3 above shows that the teacher used direct corrective feedback with the total number of 91. This type was predominantly used by the teacher to give corrective feedback on the students' writing. Moreover, the language feature of subject verb errors was ranked the top. It was mostly employed by the teacher with the total number of 37 (40.65%). Sentence structure was the second most frequent error with the total number of 34 (37.37%). Word choice was the third most common errors used as many as 20 occurrences (21.98)%. Thus, it can be summarized that the language feature of subject verb errors ranks the top; the sentence structure was the second most frequent language features; word choice was the third most

common language features. Example 1-3 illustrate the types of direct corrective feedback in language features.

1) Subject-Verb Errors

   a. "*MAN 2 Ponorogo is a one of favorite school*ˢ *in JawaTimur.*" and "*MAN 2 Ponorogo has many room*ˢ.*" (Analysis of Student 1 Essay from Class A)*

   In English, plural forms are sometimes constructed by adding *'s'* or *'es'* in the end part of the word. The student's writing above the omission of *'s'* to indicate a plural form.

   b. "*MAN 2 Ponorogo*ⁱˢ *one of the Madrasah* Aliyah *land in Ponorogo*" and "*MAN 2 Ponorogo*ⁱˢ *facilitated with a comfortable class, gazebo, canteen*ˢ, *praying rom,* ᵃ *parking lot, teacher*'ˢ *room, gor, and sports field*".(Analysis of Student 4 Essay from Class A)*

   The student made an error by not inserting auxiliary "Be" between the subject and predicate.

2) Word Choice

   a. "*There is a gazebo that is useful* ᶠᵒʳ *breaks or anything*". (Analysis of Student 1Essay from Class B)*

   In this case, the teacher wrote the word 'for' as a conjunction to link the verb and adverb.

   b. "*In Man 2 Ponorogo there are three majors that are* ⁿᵃᵗᵘʳᵃˡ *science, social studies, and religion*". (Analysis of Student 2 Essay from Class B)*

   In this case, some word should be added to explain the information of the sentence.

3) Sentence Structure

   a. "*Man 2 Ponorogo is one of* ᵗʰᵉ *Islamic Senior High School in Ponorogo, located at SoekarnoHatta Street No. 381 Keniten, Ponorogo*" and "*It is one of* ᵗʰᵉ *favorite school*ˢ *in East Java*". (Analysis of Student 3 Essay from Class A)*

In this sentence, an article '*the*' should be added to point something.

b. *"There is a classroom, **A**ᵃrt**R**ʳoom, scout room, language laboratory, teacher'ˢ**R**ʳoom, **H**ʰeadmaster room, library, computer lab**oratory**, and many more. (Analysis of Student 2 Essay from Class B)*

The example shows that there are capitalization errors. Capitalization is not used in the middle of the sentence except the word which indicate the name of a person, place, or thing. Meanwhile, the letter in the beginning of the third sentence should be written in capital letter. The teacher also found that there is a case of errors on spelling made by the student. The student might think that if he missed a letter or overwrote the letter in a word does not change the meaning. Next, the teacher also corrected the word '*lab*' to '*laboratory*'.

Indirect corrective feedback used. With regard to indirect corrective feedback, the students concentrated on error corrections with the help of the teacher's comments. The students who got indirect corrective feedback preferred to correct their errors than modify the content. Therefore, the analysis of indirect corrective feedback employed by the teacher is as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4

Indirect Corrective Feedback used by the Teacher

Total corrective feedback	Total number of indirect corrective feedback	Percentage
108	14	12,97%

Table 4 above presents the total number of the indirect corrective feedback employed by the teacher was 14 or 12,97%. This means that the

teacher employed very few instances of indirect corrective feedback on the students' writing. It occurred to help the students learn from their errors and asked them to be more independent in identifying errors.

Furthermore, in order to know the frequency of each language features of indirect corrective feedback, Table 5 presents the teachers' indirect corrective feedback on their students' writing.

Table 5

The Frequency of Indirect Corrective Feedback

Indirect Corrective Feedback	Language features			Total
	sv	wc	ss	
	3	4	7	14
Percentage	21,42%	28,58%	50%	100%

Table 5 clearly shows that the teacher rarely used this kind of corrective feedback. There were only 14 (12,97%) indirect corrective feedback occurrences. Based on table above, the teacher mostly applied indirect uncoded corrective feedback. The result of this study showed that the teacher simply circled or underlined the errors. The teacher rarely marked the errors using symbols.

The teacher was more likely to give indirect corrective feedback on sentence structures with 7 occurrences (50%), followed by word choices with 4 occurrences (28,58%), and subject verb errors with 3 occurrences (21,42)%. The following examples (1-3) illustrate the use of indirect corrective feedback in language features.

1) Subject-Verb Errors
   a. *"Many plants with hydroponic system is? maintaned by students in MAN 2 Ponorogo as a superior product". (Analysis of Student 1 Essay from Class A)*

The error was found in the category of missing be in simple predicate. The teacher gave circle and question mark near the incorrect word. The sentence above is formed in simple tense. For a plural person, place, or things, it uses *'are'* not *'is'*.

b. *"When you enter~~ed~~ this school you can see many plants around the building".* *(Analysis of Student 2 Essay from Class A)*
The sentence above is a simple present form. The word *'entered'* is not correctly verb used. The right form is "When you **enter** this school you can see many plants around the building".

2) Word Choice

a. ***"I explain**, ᴵinside this school, there is ᴮadminton ˢports ᴴall, ~~there is also~~ volleyball court, ~~and~~ futsal fields and basketball court. (Analysis of Student 1 Essay from Class B)*
The student added or omitted the words which actually should exist. The word in the beginning sentence started with the word *'inside'*. The beginning letter in each of words *'ᴮadmintonˢports ᴴall'* should not be written in capital letter. 'The conjunction *'and'* in the sentence is appropriately because it is should located in the last of sentence. The teacher underlined *'there is also'* in the sentence "language laboratory, computer laboratory, **~~there is also~~** a canteen, school cooperative".

b. *"This school has many ~~class.A~~nd ~~it has~~ a sports hall".* *(Analysis of Student 3 Essay from Class B)*
The word *'it* has' should be deleted because this sentence is parallel sentence. It only need addition conjunction *'and'* to correlate with the previous word.

3) Sentence Structure

a. ***"I explain**, ᴵinside this school, there is ᴮadminton ˢports ᴴall, ~~there is also~~ volleyball court, **and** futsal fields andbasketball court. (Analysis of Student 1 Essay from Class B)*

The word in the beginning sentence started with the word *'inside'*. The beginning letter in each of words *'~~B~~adminton~~S~~ports ~~H~~all'* should not be written in capital letter. 'The conjunction *'and'* in the sentence is appropriately because it is should located in the last of sentence. The teacher underlined '*there is also*' in the sentence "language laboratory, computer laboratory, **~~there is also~~** a canteen, school cooperative".

b. *"**It's** a huge school", "**It's** hard to ~~boring~~ᵇᵉ ᵇᵒʳᵉᵈ when ~~you~~ study", and "I like stay here till dawn, cause**it's** a very comfortable place". (Analysis of Student 3 Essay from Class B)*

It not should happen if there is an abbreviation word in writing. The teacher circled the abbreviation word and the student is expected to understand the errors. This sentence is not formed from two sentences so the punctuation coma [,] after the word 'dawn' is should be deleted.

Metalinguistic corrective feedback used. Metalinguistic corrective feedback is similar with the direct corrective feedback in a way that it provides the students with some forms of explicit comments about the nature of the errors. This type is an additional form of direct corrective feedback which is defined as comments, information, or questions related to correctness of student are writing (Ellis 2009). Metalinguistic corrective feedback uses codes to correct students' errors. The codes are like "*S*" for *subject*, "*V2*" for *past form*, "*conj*" for *conjunctions*, etc. For example: He *climbᵛ²* the top of the mountain yesterday. Henceforth, Table 6 presents the use of metalinguistic by the teacher.

Table 6

Metalinguistic Corrective Feedback used by the Teacher

Total corrective feedback	Total number of metalinguistic corrective feedback	Percentage
108	3	2,78%

Table 6 shows that the teacher rarely employed this kind of corrective feedback type in their students' writing. The total number of using this kind of corrective feedback was only 3 occurences (2.78%). The reason behind this rare use of corrective feedback of this type might have been due to the same the reason proposed by Ellis (2009). He found in his study that direct corrective feedback had a clear advantage in the use of some grammatical areas. The students were significantly more able to correct errors that were underlined than errors that were either not marked or only indicated by a check in the margin. He also explained that students failed to correct errors not because they lacked of grammatical knowledge but as they could not detect the errors. They could possibly correct more errors when direct clues were provided. Therefore, this type is rarely used by the teacher in their students' writing.

In addition, the frequency of each language features of metalinguistic corrective feedback used by the teacher is presented in the following Table 7.

Table 7

The Frequency of Metalinguistic Corrective Feedback

Metalinguistic	Language features			Total
Corrective	sv	wc	ss	
Feedback	1	1	1	3
Percentage	33,33%	33,33%	33,33%	100%

Based on the Table 7 above language features of subject-verb, word choice, and sentence structure were equal with the frequent errors in metalinguistic corrective feedback. The frequency of three language features of errors was only 1 (33.33%). This demonstrates that metalinguistic corrective feedback was rarely used by the teacher in the grammatical concept of writing. The following examples illustrate the use of teachers' written metalinguistic corrective feedback.

1) Subject-Verb Errors

   a. *"There are also excellent classes with air conditioning and ~~there are also~~^(not necessary) ornamental plants that decorate every point of space". (Analysis of Student 4 Essay from Class A)*

   The student' writing above showed metalinguistic comment and question corrective feedback were used by the teacher. The student used two expletive pronoun *'there are also'* which makes it not replace a noun, phrase, or clause. The student should need one expletive pronoun to explain the sentence. Therefore, the teacher applied elicited a comment about the error.

2) Word Choice

   a. *"~~The~~ schools that ~~are~~²² highly favored by citizens or children".*

   The teacher applied metalinguistic question corrective feedback with an attempt to elicit the information from the students. This kind of metalinguistic feedback required the students to think their ideas regarding the language form.

3) Sentence Structure

   a. *"the class is divided into __3__ classroom_- of 6 classes of Natural Science, __4__ class_- of Natural Science, __4__ class_- of Social Science and 1 class of Religion". (Analysis of Student 2 Essay from Class B)*

   The teacher gave ' ' sign in every number written by the student in the sentence. The teacher intended that the use of number in the sentence should be written in a word.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Regarding the importance of writing, the teacher should direct their students to be good writers. As being successful is accompanied with obstacles, the students also find difficulties in the process of learning

writing. Therefore, the teacher could help the students correct their errors by giving corrective feedback on their writing.

This study was conducted to investigate the type of corrective feedback used by the teacher on the senior high school students writing assignment. The data of this study was teacher's written corrective feedback on language features proposed by Ferris and Roberts (2001) by classifying the language features into three kinds: subject-verb errors, word choice, and sentence structure. In order to collect the data, the researcher asked permission from the teacher to copy and write the information related to the kinds of corrective feedback on the students' writing assignment to be analyzed.

The findings of this study revealed that the teacher employed corrective feedback to correct the students' writing assignment complying with the typology of corrective feedback by Ellis (2009). To sum up, it can be concluded that the teacher employed direct corrective feedback as the most frequently used corrective feedback with 91 occurrences (84.25%), followed by indirect corrective feedback 14 (12.47%), and metalinguistic only 3 (2.78%).

The result of this study could give beneficial inputs to the teacher about teaching writing especially in giving corrective feedback on students' writing. It would be interesting if the teachers not only pay more attention to the errors made by the students but also the causes of the errors in writing.

Meanwhile, the students are also expected to increase their knowledge about language features so they would be aware of the errors they made from this study.

Further, the limitation of this study was that no trustworthiness was involved to systematically investigate the teacher's written corrective feedback from another researcher. The researcher did not use any investigator triangulation in order to limit the subjectivity. Future studies

need to triangulate the findings in order that the results can become more confidently drawn as well as the claims made in this study.

In conclusion, in spite of its limitation, the result of this study is expected to give informative input about corrective feedback in writing. The researcher believes that there are still many phenomena that could be revealed in this study. Therefore, the researcher expects that the result of this study could inspire other researchers to conduct studies related to corrective feedback to enrich the existing study. Future researchers could investigate more ways in giving corrective feedback to motivate the students and, in turn, improve their writing ability.

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