

Students' Preferences Towards Lecturer's Written Corrective Feedback in Writing Class

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ABSTRACT

Providing written corrective feedback on student's writing is one of the ways to guide students in improving the quality of their writing. In providing written corrective feedback to student's writing, the lecturer should select the appropriate types of written corrective feedback by considering the student's characteristics and needs. To know the students' needs, the lecturer may consider the student's preferences towards the written corrective feedback. This research aimed to find out students' preferences towards written corrective feedback given by the lecturer to their writings. It employed a descriptive qualitative approach. The subjects of the research were 25 students of Advanced Writing class. The instruments used were questionnaires and interviews. The result of this research showed that the students' most preferred type of written corrective feedback is direct corrective feedback and the most preferred type of error that should be corrected by the students is grammatical error. On top of that, most of the students preferred that the lecturer mark all the errors. They also preferred to have written corrective feedback given after the class in private. Additionally, most of the students feel motivated after receiving written corrective feedback. These findings implied that it is essential for the lecturers to consider students' preferences towards written corrective feedback in the teaching-learning process. By giving written corrective feedback based on students' preferences, the lecturers can help students in improving their writing skills.

Keywords: *Students' preferences, Written Corrective Feedback, Writing.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of four skills that must be mastered in English. Writing is the mental work of inventing thoughts, thinking about how to convey them, and arranging them into sentences and paragraphs that a reader can understand [21]. In other words, writing is a thinking process to express ideas by using words, letters, and symbols that must be organized well to be sentences or paragraphs. Writing is considered to be the most essential language skill required by the students for their individual improvement and academic achievement [20]. In other words, students need to master writing skills to get advancement in their academic careers. Since the students must accomplish their academic writing assignments such as a thesis, a journal, an essay, or other written tasks, it is important to have good writing skills for students. Therefore, learning how to write well is needed by the students to help them produce good academic writings.

However, writing is considered the most difficult and complex skill for EFL students to learn [21]. It is due to the complexity of structure, vocabulary, syntax, semantics, grammar, and some other aspects of the language. Therefore, the students have to put more emphasis on practice to produce good writing and master writing skill. To improve students' writing skills, EFL students are usually given writing tasks in writing courses for practicing to write and produce good writing. However, some EFL students have difficulty when they are writing paragraphs and essays. They still make errors in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, etc. Therefore, the role of the lecturer is needed to overcome the students' problems in writing. Lecturers must find ways to help the students not to repeat errors in writing. One way that can be done by the lecturers to correct errors in students' writing is to provide written corrective feedback (WCF) in their writing.

Providing written corrective feedback on student's writing is one of the ways to guide students in improving the quality of their writing. Written

corrective feedback refers to written teacher input on a student essay with a view to enhancing grammatical consistency (including spelling, capitalization, and punctuation) and also idiomatic usage (including the choice of word and the order of words) [5]. In other words, the lecturer provides written corrective feedback when the students miss the grammatical rules or the idiom use in their writing. The purpose of providing written corrective feedback is to make students know their own errors. By knowing their own errors, students can revise their writing and write more accurately. The result is the students will produce good writing.

In providing written corrective feedback to student's writing, the lecturer should select the types of written corrective feedback wisely which appropriate to the student's needs. To know the student's needs in the teaching-learning process, the lecturer may consider the student's preferences towards the written corrective feedback from their lecturer. Student preference refers to a student's own style or way of doing everything especially in education [22]. In other words, students have their own desire, needs, and choices on the way they like to be corrected. In addition, because a mismatch between the expectations and the realities of the student which they meet in the classroom can limit language acquisition development, the lecturer must understand the students' views about language teaching and learning [11]. Therefore, to avoid the mismatch between student's preferences and the written corrective feedback provided by the lecturer, it is important to consider the student's preferences. By knowing students' preferences, the lecturer can provide more appropriate teaching methods and help the students in learning writing more effectively. As a result, maximum learning outcomes can be achieved.

There are many researches that investigated students' preferences towards written corrective feedback [2,13,15]. The results showed that each student's preference for written corrective feedback is varied. Regarding students' preferences to type of written corrective feedback, Black & Nanni [2] suggested that the most students' preferred type of written corrective feedback was direct corrective feedback. On the contrary, a similar study conducted by Iswandari [13] found that the majority of the students prefer indirect written corrective feedback. In the term of the type of error that should be given written corrective feedback, some studies showed that form-focused errors, including grammatical, punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary should be prioritized for correction than content-focused errors [13,15].

Most of the studies have more focused on students' preferences towards the types of written corrective feedback and the type of error that should be corrected. However, the students' preferences towards the ways and the time written corrective feedback should be

given have not been explored. Moreover, there are few researches that explored the reason behind their preferences.

In fact, their preferences and attitudes towards written corrective feedback are considerable. Understanding these preferences is very important in the teaching and learning process. This is supported by Lee [16] who mentioned that "teachers may run the risk of using strategies that are counter-productive if they do not understand how students feel about and respond to teacher feedback". In other words, by knowing what students' preferences are, it allows teachers to apply appropriate techniques and methods in the teaching-learning process that suit students' preferences. As the result, the teaching-learning writing process will be more efficient. Therefore, teachers should focus more on knowing what students' preferences are. The more teachers consider their students' preferences regarding written corrective feedback, the more positively they will react to the correction provided.

Based on the explanation above, it is essential to investigate students' preferences toward lecturer's written corrective feedback.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Writing

Writing is one of the four English skills in language teaching, including listening, speaking, and reading. According to Nunan [21], writing is the mental activity of inventing ideas, thinking about how they can be expressed and organized into sentences and paragraphs that a reader can understand. Moreover, writing is one of the efficient language skills which handles message transmission with graphical symbols [23]. According to them, writing is an activity to express one's ideas through the use of letters, terms, phrases, and clauses in a sequence of connected sentences. From the statements above, it can be concluded that writing is a thinking process to express ideas by using words, letters, and symbols that must be organized well to be sentences or paragraphs.

2.2. Corrective Feedback

Corrective feedback is a feedback that is given by the teacher when the student uses the target language incorrectly. Corrective feedback (CF) is an important part of the language course and allows teachers to provide information on the grammatical of oral and written production. Corrective feedback can be in the form of written or verbal feedback [7]. Moreover, corrective feedback is a teacher's critical method in a second language (L2) classroom to solve learners' errors [4]. It can be concluded that corrective feedback is feedback given by teachers to correct student

grammatical errors in the form of written or oral comments so they can correct their errors and improve their skills.

2.3. *Written corrective Feedback*

Written corrective feedback is generally defined as corrections, remarks, words of encouragement or praise, advice, and recommendations to encourage students to make improvements to their written compositions [12]. According to Ducken [5], written corrective feedback refers to written teacher input on a student essay with a view to enhancing grammatical consistency (including spelling, capitalization, and punctuation) and also idiomatic usage (including the choice of word and the order of words). Moreover, written corrective feedback refers to the correction of grammatical errors to enhance a student's ability to write accurately [24]. From those definitions, It can be concluded that written corrective feedback refers to written correction to the grammatical error of the student that is given in order to improve the student's ability to write accurately.

2.4. *Type of written corrective Feedback*

There are six types of written corrective feedback, such as direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, metalinguistic corrective feedback, the focus of feedback, electronic feedback, and reformulation [6]. It has its own advantages and disadvantages for each type.

2.4.1. *Direct corrective feedback*

Direct corrective feedback allows the teacher to correct the error by providing the students with the right form. Typically, the teacher removes an unneeded word, morpheme, phrase, replaces them with a missing word, morpheme, phrase, and writes the word correctly at the top or near the incorrect form [8].

2.4.2. *Indirect corrective feedback*

Indirect corrective feedback shows that the student committed an error that's not immediately corrected. This can be done by underlining the error, placing the cursor to indicate the error, or providing a cross beside the line in the writing of the student that has the error. Therefore, this helps determine whether or not to provide the exact location of the error.

2.4.3. *Metalinguistic corrective feedback*

Teachers provide metalinguistic clues to show the errors made by students through metalinguistic corrective feedback. The teacher may use error codes as a clue to show the learners' errors. Codes can take the shape of abbreviated words for various types of errors. For instance, the teacher could write "art" for showing

the error of article, "prep" for showing the error of preposition, "sp" for showing the error of spelling, "WW" for showing the error of wrong word, "t" for showing the error of the tenses, and so on. The other way to show the students' errors is through metalinguistic explanations or brief grammatical descriptions. All words considered to be incorrect are marked with a number by the teacher. The teacher gives a grammatical description dependent on the number of errors at the end of the passage.

2.4.4. *The focus of feedback*

The focus of feedback is categorized into two types such as focused feedback and unfocused feedback. Focused feedback indicates that the teacher only corrects the specific errors and omits the other errors. It can be seen in this example, "she take the money from your walet". From the example, it can be shown that there are two errors (i.e. grammatical errors and spelling error) but the teacher just focuses on the grammatical error and ignores the spelling error, the teacher will give correction like this, "she take money from your walet". Meanwhile, unfocused feedback indicates that the teacher gives correction to all the errors, such as article errors, grammatical errors, spelling errors, etc. For example, "she take money from your wallet". From the example, it can be shown that there are two errors. Then, the teacher will give corrections like this, "she took money from your wallet".

2.4.5. *Electronic feedback*

Electronic feedback indicates that the teacher will use technology to correct students' errors. For example, Milton [18] offers a method that is based on a software tool namely Mark MyWords. It gives teachers access to an electronic database including roughly 100 lexico-grammatical and stylistic errors commonly found in the writing of Chinese students. In addition, the tool gives a brief explanation for each error as well as links to resources that demonstrate the correct form.

2.4.6. *Reformulation*

Reformulation means rewriting the text of a learner, retaining all his thoughts while deleting grammatical errors, lexical inadequacies, and ambiguities, so that it looks as native-possible [17]. It is believed that reformulation gives students a variety of discursive, syntactical, and lexical options when compared to their own writing, which may result in more in-depth processing than more traditional corrective feedback tactics like the other types [9]. In short, reformation entails a native speaker rewrites the students' complete text in an attempt to give as natural a language as possible while maintaining the existing text.

3. METHODOLOGY

The design of this research was descriptive qualitative research. The subjects of this research were 25 students who are taking Advanced Writing Class at English Language Education Program of Lambung Mangkurat University who were selected by using purposive sampling technique. In collecting the data, the instruments that were used were questionnaires and interview. The questionnaires were distributed to the students to find out their preferences towards written corrective feedback given by the lecturers. A combination of the close-ended and open-ended questionnaires was used to obtain the data. In addition, a semi-structured interview was conducted to get deep information of the data by exploring the reasons for the students' preferences towards written corrective feedback from their lecturer. The researcher used expert judgment to measure the construct validity of the instruments of this research. Expert validation was used in validating the questionnaire and interview. The validator of the instrument is a lecturer who is an expert in writing skills. The data was analyzed qualitatively through some steps: preparing and organizing the data for analysis, reading all data, coding the data, coding to build description/themes, and interpreting the findings.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Students' preference towards types of written corrective feedback from their lecturer

On the first item of the questionnaire, the students were asked which type of WCF that they preferred. There are six types of written corrective feedback, such as direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, metalinguistic corrective feedback, the focus of feedback, electronic feedback, and reformulation [6]. Since not all of the students are familiar with the types of written corrective feedback, the researcher gave the definition of each type of written corrective feedback on the options of the questionnaire to make students more understand which type they prefer given by the lecturer in their writing. The following table shows the result of the first item of the questionnaire.

Table 1. Students' preferences toward type of WCF

Type of WCF	Frequency	Percentage
Direct Corrective Feedback	21	84%
Indirect Corrective Feedback	18	72%
Metalinguistic Corrective Feedback	14	56%
Focused Feedback	2	8%
Unfocused Feedback	2	8%
Electronic Feedback	9	36%
Reformulation	1	4%

Table 1. shows the frequency and percentage of students' preferences towards types of written corrective feedback. Based on the highest percentage, it shows that direct corrective feedback is the most preferred type of written corrective feedback by the students, with 84 % of responses. In contrast, reformulation is the least preferred type of written corrective feedback by students with 4% of responses.

To get deeper information on the data, the students were asked about the reason for preferring the types of written corrective feedback through interviews. The following table shows the result of the first question of the interview.

Table 2. Reasons for preferring the types of written corrective feedback

Type of WCF	Reason
Direct Corrective Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It makes the students comprehend their errors easily • It makes the students know the error and the correction clearly • The student can learn from what has been corrected by their lecturer
Indirect Corrective Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It makes the students more independent because they have to do follow-up corrections by themselves • It guides the students to notice the error • It helps the students find the correct answer
Metalinguistic Corrective Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It makes the student where the error is • The clue/sign will be understood easily
Focused Feedback	The students know the importance of all the types of errors, the students think all the errors should be corrected
Unfocused Feedback	-
Electronic Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It provides a clear explanation about what are their error • The website provides the credible correction, especially on grammatical error • It is helpful for the students when the lecturer cannot correct their writing.

Reformulation	-
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Based on the findings, it can be concluded that direct corrective feedback is the most preferred type of feedback because they will know the error and the correction clearly. The students also can learn from the correction given by the lecturer. As a result, it makes the students understand their errors easily. These findings were similar to those found in the study by Chandler [3] showing that most students preferred direct corrective feedback since it was the quickest and simplest method to help them correct their writing drafts.

4.2. Students’ preferences towards types of error that must be given written corrective feedback from their lecturer

On the second item of the questionnaire, the students were asked which type of error that must be given written corrective feedback from their lecturer. There are six types of errors such as organization errors, grammatical errors, content/idea errors, punctuation errors, spelling errors, and vocabulary errors [1]. The following table shows the result of the second item of the questionnaire.

Table 3. Students’ preferences toward type of errors should be corrected

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Organization Errors	10	40%
Grammatical Errors	18	72%
Content/Idea Errors	16	64%
Punctuation Errors	10	40%
Spelling Errors	6	24%
Vocabulary Errors	12	48%

Table 3. shows that the frequency and percentage of students’ preferences towards the type of error that should be corrected by the lecturer. Based on the highest percentages, the majority of the students (72%) preferred grammatical error should be corrected by the lecturer. On the contrary, only 24% of students preferred spelling errors should be corrected by the lecturer.

To get deeper information on the data, the students were asked about the reason for preferring the types of errors that must be corrected through interviews. The following table shows the result of the second question of the interview.

Table 4. Reasons for preferring the types of error that must be corrected

Type of error	Frequency
Organization Errors	• The student usually makes the error because there is different word arrangement in English and Indonesia

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has a hard time organizing idea • It cannot be noticed by using the application
Grammatical Errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar is the most difficult subject in English • The students find themselves lacking in grammar, especially on the use of tenses • The students usually do not realize if they make grammatical errors in their writing
Content/Idea Errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students usually have a hard time organizing content and idea in their writing • The students think that they always struggle in finding new ideas after writing one paragraph • The students want to know whether their writing is related to the context and topic given
Punctuation Errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students often make many punctuation errors • Punctuation may affect the meaning of words
Spelling Errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their spelling is not good enough • The students probably choose the wrong character or letters in writing the word
Vocabulary Errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing becomes difficult because the students still lack a vocabulary • The students want to know the choice of words that are appropriate to be used in writing • The students tend to write words repeatedly due to a lack of vocabulary

It can be concluded that grammatical error is the most preferred type of error that should be corrected. The majority of students need to receive written corrective feedback to help them know the correct grammar because the students think that they still lack grammar skills, especially in the use of tenses. It has the same result as [13], which also found that the majority of students preferred that the lecturer should assist them in correcting the grammatical errors such as tenses, the order of words, and the structure of the sentence. Moreover, some students argued that grammar is the most difficult subject in English. Therefore, the grammatical error is important to be corrected since most of the students think that they tend to make errors in grammar. These results match the study by Jodaie [14], who found that the majority of the students preferred to get grammar correction on every draft.

4.3. Students’ preferences towards how written corrective feedback should be given by the lecturer

On the third item of the questionnaire, the students were asked about how the WCF were given; the lecturer marked all the errors, marked some errors, gave no

marks at all, or gave comments on the ideas and content. This item is adopted from [1]. The following table shows the result of the third item of the questionnaire.

Table 5. Students' preference toward how WCF should be given

Way of WCF	Frequency	Percentage
Mark all errors	13	52%
Mark all major errors but a not minor one	6	24%
Mark most of the major errors, but not necessarily all of them	7	28%
Mark only a few of the major errors	1	4%
Mark only the errors that interfere with communicating your ideas	5	20%
Mark no errors and respond only to the ideas and content	0	0%

Table 5. show the frequency and percentage of students' preference toward how written corrective feedback should be given by the lecturer. Based on the highest percentage, the most preferred option that chosen by the students is the lecturer should mark all the errors with 52% of responses. On the contrary, none of the students preferred the lecturer marks no error and responds only to the ideas and content.

To get deeper information on the data, the students were asked about the reason for their preferring how written corrective should be given. The following table shows the result of the third question of the interview.

Table 6. Reasons for preferring how WCF should be given

Way of WCF	Reason
Mark all errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be totally clear for the students to correct their error • To avoid misinformation on the students because they are likely to repeat their error due to not knowing their error
Mark all major errors but a not minor one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The major error is important to correct since it will have a big impact on students' writing • The students want to focus more on correcting the major error than the minor one
Mark most of the major errors, but not necessarily all of them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By knowing the major problem, it will give the students to get better in writing. • The students have to focus more on their major problems in writing
Mark only a few of the major errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will make the students exercise for finding and correcting the other unmarked errors
Mark only the errors that interfere with communicating your ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students want their writing can reach people with the correct choice of words.

Mark no errors and respond only to the ideas and content	-
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Based on the findings, the majority of the students preferred that the lecturer marks all the errors in students' writing. They believed that the marks helped them to revise the parts that were wrong. Moreover, they could learn from the errors so that they would not make the same errors again in the future. This preference is in line with the research conducted by Amrhein [1], which found that the majority of students preferred that the teacher should mark all errors in students' written text because they believe that the more teacher's written corrective feedback students receive, the more valuable it is.

4.4. Students' preferences towards when written corrective feedback should be given by the lecturer

On the fourth item, the students were asked when written corrective feedback should be given by the lecturer. There are three options that the researcher provided for students to choose, such as gives written corrective feedback individually on my writing during the class, if everyone in the class also makes the same error as me, and after class in private. The following table shows the result of the fourth item of the questionnaire

Table 7. Students' preferences toward when WCF should be given

Time of WCF	Frequency	Percentage
Individually on my writing during the class	9	36%
During the class, if everyone in the class also makes the same error as me	8	32%
After class in private	14	56%
Other: On the next meeting	5	20%

Table 7. shows the frequency and percentage of students' preferences toward how written corrective feedback should be given. The results show that the majority of the students (56%) preferred the feedback is given after the class in private. On the other hand, there were 20% of the students who preferred to have the feedback on the next meeting.

To get deeper information on the data, the students were asked about the reasons for preferring the time when written corrective feedback should be given. The following table shows the result of the fourth question of the interview.

Table 8. Reasons for preferring the time when WCF should be given

Time of WCF	Reason
Individually on my writing during the class	It can help the students to know their error and the other students to realize their same error
During the class, if everyone in the class also makes the same error as me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student does not want to be the only one that given the written corrective feedback The students can correct the errors together
After class in private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is an effective way for the students to be more focused on correcting their error and having a discussion with their lecturer about how to fix their error The students feel embarrassed, not confident, and nervous when the written corrective feedback is given during class in front of their classmates The lecturers will pay enough attention to their work
Other: On the next meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lecturer needs time to correct the students' writing The students do not want to bother thinking about their writings while they are still on the same day of the meeting.

The findings show that most of the students preferred that the feedback was given after the class in private. The students believed that it was an effective way for them to be more focused on correcting their errors. They also could have a discussion with their lecturers about how to fix their errors. This way could help them if they were confused in correcting the errors. By learning through discussion, they can fix the errors and make their writings better. This finding is supported by Hardavella [10], who suggested offering feedback in a private setting and ensuring that feedback is delivered as soon as possible after the event.

Besides, the students felt embarrassed, not confident, and nervous when the feedback was given during the class in front of their classmates, especially when they made many errors in their writings. Hardavella [10] elaborates that if someone lacks confidence, they may demonstrate shyness, difficulties asserting themselves, or a lack of understanding of their own rights and prospects. In short, people who are less confident with their writing choose to be given written corrective feedback in private.

4.5. Students' feelings after receiving written corrective feedback from their lecturer

On the fifth item, the students were asked about how was their feeling when they received written corrective feedback from their lecturer. There are four options that the researcher provided for students to choose to present their feelings toward the feedback, such as motivated,

embarrassed, confused, and annoyed. The following table shows the result of the fifth item of the questionnaire.

Table 9. Students' feeling after receiving WCF

Feeling	Frequency	Percentage
Motivated	24	96%
Embarrassed	4	16%
Confused	5	20%
Annoyed	0	0%

Table 9 shows the frequency and percentage of students' feelings after receiving written corrective feedback. Most of the students (96%) show that they were motivated after their lecturer gave them written corrective feedback. In contrast, none of the students felt annoyed after receiving written corrective feedback.

To get the deeper information of the data, the students were asked about reasons for the feeling after receiving written corrective feedback from their lecturer through interviews. The following table shows the result of the fifth question of the interview.

Table 10. Reason for the feeling after receiving written corrective feedback

Feeling	Reason
Motivated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It makes the students curious in finding their error and the solution by themselves The students can make the best writing after receiving written corrective feedback The lecturer not only give written corrective feedback but also suggestion and support to improve their writing skill
Embarrassed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The students are a shy person If my lecturer gives written corrective feedback in front of their friend
Confused	The students are sometimes confused with the written corrective feedback given
Annoyed	-

As displayed in the table, most of the students feel motivated after receiving written corrective feedback. The students were motivated after receiving the feedback because it made them curious in finding their errors and the solution by themselves. This eventually motivated them to make the best writing after receiving written corrective feedback. Furthermore, they were motivated because the lecturer not only gave them feedback but also gave them suggestion and support to improve their writing skills. This finding is in line with [19] who found that specific, fast, informative, and supportive corrective feedback provided by the lecturer which provides a variety of marks for existing errors effectively stimulates students' writing motivation which has an impact on improvising the quality of their

writing due to the reduction of errors in several aspects of English as the target language in written works.

5. CONCLUSION

The result of this research showed that students have different preferences towards written corrective feedback. The students' most preferred type of written corrective feedback is direct corrective feedback, and the most preferred type of error that should be corrected by the students is grammatical error. On top of that, most of the students preferred that the lecturer should mark all the errors and the written corrective feedback should be given after the class in private. Additionally, most of the students feel motivated after receiving written corrective feedback.

Based on the findings, it is suggested to the lecturers to consider students' preferences towards written corrective feedback in the teaching-learning process to avoid the mismatch between the student's preferences and the written corrective feedback provided by the lecturer. By knowing students' preferences, the lecturer can provide appropriate written corrective feedback that helps the students learn writing more effectively. As a result, maximum learning outcomes can be achieved.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

GSRR contributed to the reviewing of literature, designing research instruments, collecting the data, and analyzing the data. AM contributed to the design of the research, data analysis, and writing the report whereas ERF 3 contributed to literature review and the writing format.

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