

# The Effect of Direct Corrective Feedback on Students' Writing Performance

Siti Mafulah<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Negeri Malang

\*Corresponding author. Email: [siti.mafulah.1902219@students.um.ac.id](mailto:siti.mafulah.1902219@students.um.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate whether there is an effect of direct corrective feedback on students' writing performance. The writing performance in this research was focused on the grammatical error made by the students. Quasi-experiment was implied in this research. There were two classes involved in this study, class A as experiment group that was consisted of 26 students and class B as control group students that was consisted of 27 students. Five meetings were carried out including pre-test and post-test. The finding showed that there was no significant difference between students who were received direct and no feedback on their performance of writing. It means that there is no one better than another, it is suggested for the future researcher to conduct an in-depth study regarding different types of corrective feedback.

**Keywords:** *Direct Corrective Feedback, Argumentative Writing, Writing Performance*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one way to spread ideas to be read all over the world. Writing is not easy to do, it does not only deal with translating ideas into text but also the work of creating content and fitting the way the text meets readers' interests and needs [1]. Therefore, students should know the process of writing before they write what is in their minds. The process of writing can be done through several steps like planning before they write, drafting their first writing followed by editing their draft to finally have a final version [2]. In the planning stage, students do preparation before they begin to write. The preparation can be in the form of ideas, topic, and outline for the first draft. The next step is drafting, students can develop their outline into their essay. The third stage is editing, in this stage students revise their first draft, and the last phase is final revision. To improve students' final draft, EFL students still need feedback from the teacher to check their content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and so on.

Corrective feedback has an important role in students' writing. Corrective feedback refers to providing negative or positive evidence for wrong utterances, encouraging students to fix not only their intelligibility but also their accuracy and precision [3]. Corrective feedback in the L2 classroom has gained not

only prominence in studies of second language acquisition but also in EFL learning. Brown [4] suggests that teachers should give reactions including responding and correcting to the students' writing. Corrective feedback in EFL classes should be considered as an important aspect of teaching learning development as teachers can lead lessons beyond their actual purpose; balances the focus in the language classroom both on meaning and form; improves not only fluency but also accuracy. In this case, corrective feedback can function as an alternative way to know the students' problem, to know the development of the students' linguistics capability and to know the improvement of critical thinking of the students [5]

A teacher may give different forms of responses to the students' writing draft when they apply written corrective feedback. Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam [6] categorized the responses into three forms or categories: first, Teacher responds to the students' writing by giving the correct version (Direct Corrective Feedback); second, the teacher shows the students' errors, but he/she does not provide the correction (Indirect Corrective Feedback). Furthermore, in giving Indirect corrective feedback, teacher can give underlines, circles, and use of highlight to show the error on the student's text [7]; and the last, the teacher may give metalinguistic clue on the students' error (Metalinguistic Corrective Feedback).

Corrective feedback has been studied by several scholars, such as Saukah, Dewanti and Laksmi [8] Their study investigated the effect of coded (CCF) and non-coded correction feedback (NCCF) on the writing performance of the senior high school students. They applied experimental research design with 63 students of 11st grade of senior high school in Bali as the subject. The instruments used were task and scoring rubric. The finding showed that the quality of students' writing after receiving CCF better than the quality of students' writing which received NCCF. Similarly, the investigation on students' writing quality was also done by Elhawwa et al. [9] they found for their first question, writing quality of the student after receiving focused direct feedback was better than the quality of students' writing with no feedback. Therefore, the study on students' writing performance or quality should be conducted.

Kurzer [10] examined direct written corrective feedback's role in developing ESL writing class using quasi-experimental research design. The findings showed that learners who were able to speak in different language or multilingualism have better accuracy and able to revise or edit their own writing draft. It means that after receiving direct corrective feedback, students are aware with the errors that they have made, and they can write better on their new draft. While Sheen [11] examined the language analytic ability of the students, differential effect of two types of written corrective feedback, and examined the factor that influenced the ability of the students (individual difference role factor). The findings showed that on the immediate post-test, students in control group had lower performance of writing than students' writing after receiving feedback both direct and direct with metalinguistic correction. From these studies, direct corrective feedback has the important point in producing better writing. Previous studies have also focused on aspects of writing such as content, organization, vocabulary, and mechanic.

This study aims to investigate whether students taught using corrective feedback are significantly different from students who are not taught using corrective feedback on their writing quality in terms of content, grammatical, vocabulary and mechanic.

The research question can be formulated as "Do the students who are taught using direct corrective feedback significantly differ from students who are not taught using corrective feedback in their writing performance?"

## 2. METHOD

Quasi-experimental research design was employed in this research due to the system that students cannot be arranged randomly. The participants were the students of Universitas PGRI Kanjuruhan Malang who were

enrolled in Essay writing classes. The characteristic of the subjects was equal, they have taken sentence and paragraph writing in the previous semester. The subjects were A class and B class. There were 26 students in A class while B class had 27 students.

The A class was designed as experimental group that given direct corrective feedback while the B class has given no feedback. The description can be seen in table 1.

**Table 1.** The Design of Experimental Research

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
A	T1	X	T2
B	T1	-	T2

A = Experimental Group, B = Control Group, T1= Pre-test, T2= Post-test

X = Treatment by Direct corrective feedback

Table 1 showed the quasi-experimental design. In experimental research, there were two groups. Those groups are called experimental group and control group. In this research, the researcher gave different treatments to both groups. At the beginning of the process, the students were given a pre-test for those groups and then administer the score of the test. After the experiment class was given treatment, a test was delivered to the students as post-test for those groups to evaluate whether the technique gave any effect for students' writing performance. Writing test was used as the instrument in this study. The test is given to measure the students' writing performance.

In doing the research, several procedures have been done, there are five sessions including giving pre-test and post-test. in the first meeting the students were given pre-test; they were asked to write an essay based on the discussed topic. The topics that delivered to the students were: *the importance of mobile phone in supporting my English performance, how to overcome Indonesian's forest fire and what is your argument about several artists who were pointed to the parliament's member*. The topics given were based on the current issue and based on the students' agreement. The detail information about the procedures can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Procedures

Meeting	Treatments	
	Experimental Group	Control Group
1 <sup>st</sup>	Writing task 1 Students were asked to write an argumentative essay with topic given.	Writing task 1 Students were asked to write an argumentative essay with topic given.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Students received their writing composition 1 with direct corrective feedback. Students should revise their writing in the class.	The students received their writing composition 1 with their score. Students should revise their writing in the class.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Writing task 2 Students were asked to write an argumentative essay with the topic given.	Writing task 2 Students were asked to write an argumentative essay with the topic given.
4 <sup>th</sup>	Students received their writing composition 2 with direct corrective feedback. Students should revise their writing in the class.	Students received their writing composition 2 with their score. Students should revise their writing in the class.
5 <sup>th</sup>	Post-test	Post-test

In the second meeting, students from the experimental group were given their first writing with direct corrective feedback and students from the control group were given underline and score. After receiving their first writing they had to revise and submitted the final revision. On the third meeting, students were given writing prompt 2. They had to write second writing task with the topic of how to overcome Indonesian's forest fire. After drafting, they had to write and submitted their writing. The writing feedback given in the following meeting, students had to revise and submit the final revision. The last meeting was post-test.

In terms of data collection, students' writing were assessed using a scoring rubric adapted from Hartfiel et al. [12] which each component has different weights. 30% for content, 20% for organization, 25% for language use, 20% for vocabulary, and 5% for mechanics. The content has the highest weighting because content is the most important aspect in writing because the content shows the ideas of the writer that should be delivered to the readers. Other components are also important to be evaluated such as language use, in this case, the assessment on language use including grammatical rules. Without good grammar it is impossible for the readers to understand what the message from the writer is. In addition, student needs to

have a good topic to be discussed, writes the topic by using good structure and organizes the idea coherently. A good writing should use various and relevant dictions and be aware of mechanical aspects. After the data were collected, to know the effect of direct corrective feedback on students writing performance, independent sample t-test was used to analyse the data.

**3. FINDINGS**

To answer the research question, the result of pre-test from the experimental and control groups were compared. The result can be seen on table 3. It showed that the mean score of the experimental group was 65.92 with the standard deviation 7.68, the mean score of the control group was 69.29 with the standard deviation 7.16. The result of comparison of the pre-test using independent sample t-test implied that there was no significant difference between experimental group and control group. It can be seen from table 4 that the significant value (p.value) is 0.760. It was higher than 0.05, meaning that the two groups were equal in their writing performance.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistics of The Pre-Test Score

Group	N	Mean	std. deviation
Experiment	26	69.92	7.68
Control	27	69.29	7.16

**Table 4.** The Comparison of The Pre-Test Scores using Independent Sample T-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	sig.	t	df	sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
pretest	Equal variances assumed	.100	.753	.307	51	.760	-.626678	2.04010	-3.46889	4.72245
	equal variances not assumed			.307	50.999	.760	-.626778	2.04288	-3.47566	4.72923

The comparison of the result of the post-test scores between the experiment and control groups after receiving treatment showed that the mean of the experiment group's score was 73.80 with standard deviation 7.64 and the mean score of the control group was 73.44 with a standard deviation 5.97. The detailed information can be seen on Table 5.

**Table 5.** The Descriptive Statistics of The Post-Test Score

	N	Mean	std. deviation
Experiment	26	73.80	7.64
Control	27	73.44	5.97

The result of comparison of the post-test using independent sample t-test implied that there was no significant difference between the experimental group (students who were treated using direct corrective feedback) and control group (students who did not receive any feedback). It can be seen from Table 5 that the significant value (*p.value*) was 0.848. It was higher than 0.05, meaning that the two groups were equal in their writing performance.

**Table 6.** The Comparison of The Post-Test Scores using Independent Sample T-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	sig.	t	df	sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval of the	
									Lower	Upper
posttest	Equal variances assumed	1.081	.303	.193	51	.848	.36325	.187968	-3.41037	4.13686
	equal variances not assumed			.192	47.308	.848	.36325	.36325	-3.43518	4.16167

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, it was found that there is no difference between students who received direct corrective feedback and students who did not receive feedback on their writing performance. In this case, the results showed that using corrective feedback was not entirely effective to the students' writing performance. This result is in line with Suyoga and Nirmala [13] that found there was no significant impact of direct feedback on students writing performance. There are some factors identified namely, the students made the same mistake as before given direct feedback, the students do not learn from the feedback. This result showed contrary to the finding of Kurzer's study that stated through the correct form of grammatical error, students learn what kinds of errors that they have ever made [10]. Student's point of view regarding that feedback is an end of learning, they think that because the correct form is provided by teacher, so they do not need to learn more. The last identification is students were less motivated to learn more deeply about their errors. In summary, having the direct correction feedback or giving clue on the students' errors offered a good effect to the students' writing performance.

Although the statistics showed the differences between group with direct corrective feedback and control group which only got their score with underlined clue for their mistake and errors, it indicated that the result is not significantly different but there was only slight difference on the mean scores with 0.39 (73.80 for direct feedback and 73.44 for indirect corrective feedback). There are some plausible explanations; 1) Limited time to revise and 2) unfamiliar writing topic.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, this study showed that students who receive both direct corrective feedback and no feedback received the same result/score. The reasons why this result of the study is not significantly different are limited time given to the student to know and comprehend their error and make self-editing and topic familiarity. The topic seems like the important aspect to be considered by teacher. It is suggested to the future researcher to conduct in-depth research on corrective feedback particularly on the aspect of grammar and language use.

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