Direct written corrective feedback to improve students' writing achievement

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of the research were to find out whether there was any improvement of the students' writing skill in recount text after they have been taught by implementing direct written corrective feedback and to find out which aspect of writing that improves the most after the implementation of direct written corrective feedback in terms of micro skills. This research is a quantitative research. The design used was one group pretest and posttest because the students' writing skill was measured in one group of participants before and after the treatments were administered. The subjects were 28 students of class VIII A of SMPN 38 Bandar Lampung. The instrument was a writing test in form of essay. The data were in form of scores taken from the pretest and posttest and were analyzed by using Paired Sample t- test. The result showed there was a statistically improvement of students' writing skill in recount text viewed from the pretest score to the posttest score (60.91 to 76.39) after they have been taught by implementing direct written corrective feedback. Furthermore, the feedback technique was not only effective in improving students' recount writing in general, but also effective in improving students' score in all aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. Language use was the aspect of writing that improved the most by direct feedback technique in terms of micro skills.

Keywords: Direct written corrective feedback, recount text, writing.

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is commonly seen as more challenging language ability for second language learners to master compared with speaking, reading, or listening. That, in order to produce a good piece of writing, second language learners writers need to concern with planning and organizing, or the macro ability, as well as the accuracy of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and diction, or the micro ability (Richards and Renandya, 2002; Brown, 2004). Writing has a lengthy process that it must go through to be accepted, as opposed to speaking. So it can be said that writing ability comes from a learning process.

Many strategies can be used to improve the writing ability of students. One of them is written corrective feedback. Bitchener and Knoch (2008) argue that "Written Corrective Feedback helps students gain and demonstrate mastery in the use of targeted linguistic form and structure". Russell and Spada (2006), also state ``Corrective feedback refers to any feedback given to students, from any source, which contains evidence of student error in the form of language ". That means that feedback in language teaching takes the form of positive reinforcement or correction for students. Feedback is expected to help students revise and develop their writing.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher used direct written feedback as a technique in teaching writing recount text. Choudron (1998). Corrective feedback is only to

emphasize that teachers use to remind students of mistakes and the teachers to try to tell about student mistakes. Corrective feedback and guidance for students can develop sentences, Lightbown and Spada (1999). Students can obtain these instructions in several ways. According to Polio (2012) states that corrective feedback regulates some knowledge and helps students to check the wrong information, and then ensures errors will not return automatically. Ferris (1999) predicted that direct corrective feedback could promote grammatical accuracy development, whereas, non-grammatical accuracy would benefit most from indirect corrections.

II.   METHODS

This research is a quantitative research. It is conducted by the second-year students of SMPN 38 Bandar Lampung. The subject of the research is a class that consists of 29 students in VIII A. This class is taken randomly by the lottery technique. Naturally, this research uses one group pretest-posttest design. This research uses direct written corrective feedback to improve students' writing achievement as the technique and the material of the research is limited only to personal recount text covering content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.
In this research, the researcher as the teacher used direct feedback proposed by Ellis (2009: 99). The forms of feedback proposed by Ellis are in the area on giving written feedback in the students' writing. The forms are crossing out an unnecessary word, phrase, or morpheme; inserting a missing word or morpheme, and writing the correct form near to the erroneous form.

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

After the students were given the treatment, the researcher administered the post-test to the students. The post-test was intended to measure the improvement of students' recount writing text after receiving the treatments implementing direct written corrective feedback. The students were given 80 minutes to write a recount text based on the pictures given by the researcher. The topic was their birthday party. Then, the students handed in their work by sending it to the researcher.

Table 4.1 Distribution odf Students' Writing Score in The pre-test and The post-test.

Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
57-58	8	27.6
59-60	11	37.9
61-62	9	31.1
63-64	1	3.4
Total	**29**	**100**

Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
67-68	1	3.4
69-70	2	6.9
71-72	4	13.8
73-74	7	24.2
75-76	13	44.8
77-78	2	6.9
Total	**29**	**100**

Table 4.1 presents the distribution of students' scores in the pre-test and the post-test. There are several differences in the score's frequency. it can be concluded that the lowest score in the pretest is 57-58 and 67-68 in the posttest. On the other hand, the highest score in the pretest is 63-64 while in the posttest is 77-78.

Table 4.2 The Gain of Students Writing Score

Mean score of pre-test	Mean score of post-test	Gain
60.91	76.39	15.48

From the Table above, it can be seen that the mean of pretest score is 60.91 and the mean of posttest score is 76.39. Besides, it is also revealed that the gain of the test is 15.48. It can be concluded that the students' scores increased from pretest to posttest. In other words, students' writing achievement improved after the students were being taught by implementing direct written corrective feedback.

4.3 Paired Sample T-Test

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Post Test - Pre Test	1.43448E1	1.93235	.35883	13.60980	15.07986	39.977	28	.000

H1 is accepted if the t-value > t-table with the level of significance at < 0.05 which means that under that situation, the H0 is rejected. Then, the table above shows that the result of the computation of the two-tailed significance value is 0.00. Hence, it can be said that H1 proposed by the researcher is accepted since 0.00 is lower than 0.05. Besides, if the t-value and the t-table are compared, it can be seen that 39.977(t-value) is higher than 2.0154(t-table). Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant improvement of students' writing achievement in the recount text after the implementation of direct written feedback.

4.4 Students' writing improvement in each aspects of writing.

Writing Aspects	Mean		Gain
	Pretest	Posttest	
Content	5.01	5,98	0,97
Organization	2.80	3,35	0,55
Vocabulary	2,79	3,39	0,60
Language use	3,53	4,83	1,30
Mechanic	0,14	0,17	0,03

From the table 4.4, it can be seen that all of the writing aspects statistically improved including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic as gain of each aspect are 0.97 (content), 0.55 (organization), 0.60 (vocabulary), 1.30 (language use), and 0.03 (mechanic). However, the highest increase is in language use with the gain of 1.3 which is followed by content with the score of 0.97; after that, there is vocabulary in the third place with the score of 0.6; organization with the score of 0.55; and the last is mechanic by having 0.03 as its gain score. Most students tend to make a greater number of errors in the pre-test such as capitalization, spelling, organizing relevant ideas, and others.

Discussion

In this research, four meetings were held to get data. The first meeting was to get the result of pretest. In this study, the pretest was conducted in order to know the students' writing achievement before getting the treatment and also to know the problem of the students in writing. The aim of the pretest is to see how far the skills of the students in writing recount text. In the pretest, the researcher found out many students did not have a good idea or content to produce a good text. It can be seen from the students' work, they had limitation in developing the idea. It also still found the problem in the language use aspect, some students still used present tense. In the students' pretest, it was found that the students' score was quite low. After conducting the pretest, the researcher conducted the treatments in the second and third meeting. In conducting the treatments, the researcher applied *Teacher's Direct Feedback* technique in the experimental class for teaching recount writing. At the end of the meeting, students were asked to take the post test to measure their abilities after being given treatment. Moreover, the result showed that students' writings were enhanced as the mean of the posttest (76.39) was higher than the mean of pretest (60.91) with the increase of 15.48. Besides, the hypothesis was accepted since the two-tailed significance of the Paired Sample T-test was lower than 0.05 while t-value was higher than t-table (11.470 > 2.0518).

In line with finding research by Sahmadan (2019), the experimental study conducted to discover and to verify the effect of providing direct WCF on 50 second grade students' writings over time through a pretest and posttest. The result revealed that direct WCF affect significantly on students' writing ability showed by the Z-score -5.525, Sig .000 < .05, and the Mean in Gain-score for experimental and control group 59.3240 and 19.0755 with the Mean difference 40.24849. Therefore, it could be concluded that the students in treatment group that acquire direct WCF had achievement in writing better than those who were obtained conventional learning.

Likewise, the researcher also analyzed the students' scores in each aspect of writing. Then, it was revealed that all of the writing aspects were improved after the implementation of direct written corrective feedback. After comparing the mean of pretest and posttest, the gain score of each aspect was calculated, coming with the result of content (0,97), organization (0,55), vocabulary (0,60), language use (1,30), and mechanic (0,03). By seeing the increase, it is clearly seen that the all aspects of writing improved.

Similar with the finding of the previous research which conducted by Syamsir (2016) that the all aspects of writing improved after implementing direct written corrective feedback in learning process. The mean score of the content increased from 15.07 in the pretest to 21.55 in the posttest. Then, it was followed by vocabulary (9.02 to 18.38), organization (9.27 to 17.43), and language use (9.47 to 17.25). Mechanics, as one of the components, was also the most difficult component for students in experimental class. The main score was only 4.60 in the posttest from 2.62 in the pretest.

Furthermore, students performed better in the posttest after implementing direct written corrective feedback in learning process of recount text especially in language use aspect. The students constructing their language form better because in the first meeting at the lesson plan the researcher focus on how to guide the students understand about the simple past tense that use in writing recount text.

Ferris (1999) proposed that written corrective feedback could be more beneficial when focused on 'treatable errors', that is, errors connecting to language forms that appear in ' a patterned, rule-governed way' (p.6)(e.g., verb tenses and form, subject-verb agreement, article usage) than 'untreatable' errors (e.g., word choice, unidiomatic sentence structure, missing or unnecessary words).

Perez et al (2013) found the students' improvement in grammar use in the revision of their writing after they received direct feedback from their teacher. Later, Hosseiny (2014) concluded that direct feedback was more advantageous than indirect one in case of complex errors, such as sentence structure and word choices. She also indicates that teachers should make sure students understand the corrective feedback given by them for the most effectiveness. Direct corrective feedback which is also known as explicit feedback is the strategy that should be employed to assist lower proficiency or beginner EFL students to overcome the difficulties of uncomplicated grammatical rules in their writing, for instance, articles, prepositions, sentence structure, word choices, etc.

The findings of this study appear to support this suggestion by revealing that direct written corrective feedback was more effective in the case of language forms that are governed by a set of syntactic and morphosyntactic rules than those that are not, such as articles, prepositions, sentence structure, word choices, etc.
There are differences among this research and the previous studies. The first is this research used pre writing, writing, and revising, while another research used two cycles. The second is the participants of the research.

According to the findings of the previous studies above and this research, the students gained improvement after the implementation of direct written corrective feedback for their writing scores. Interestingly, the improvement of students' scores did not only happen in writing text, but also in motivation of the students in writing as it had been tested by the previous researcher. In addition, it can be concluded that the implementation of direct written

corrective feedback can improve student's writing in recount text especially in terms of language use and also other English skill.

IV.   CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

On the whole, there is an improvement of students' writing achievement after they have been taught by using the teacher's direct corrective feedback. It can be seen from the computation which shows that the significance value is 0.000. It means that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted since 0.00<0.05. It was proved by the increase of the students' mean score in the posttest which was higher than in the pretest. The students' mean score was 60.91 and the mean score in the posttest was 76.39. Obviously, the gain was 15.48 points.

Specifically, the results of this research reveal that all aspects of writing improved in implementing direct written corrective feedback. However, language use was the aspect of writing that is mostly improved by teacher's feedback technique. The data reveal that all of the writing aspects increase, particularly in the language use. The mean of this aspect inclines from 14.1 in the pre-test to 3,53 in the post-test with the gain of 4,83. It is because most of the students were able to use appropriate tenses and structure in their writing.

Suggestions

For the teacher, teaching writing is not an easy work since lots of students think that writing is the most difficult skill to be learned. Consequently, teachers will face many obstacles during the teaching and learning process. Therefore, they should be clever in choosing the appropriate techniques that can both change the students' attitude towards writing and improve the students' writing skill. One of the ways they can use is through the teacher's direct corrective feedback. Teachers should also give the simple examples of good writing to students as the model they can imitate.

For the futher reaseacrch. Even though, there is an increase, the students' writing results still contain errors. Therefore, the researcher suggests for future research to explore the difficulties experienced by students in writing using direct written feedback as the technique.

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