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RESPONDING AND CORRECTING FEEDBACKS OF PEER CORRECTION ACTIVITY IN WRITING CLASS

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Abstract

This study is conducted to analyze the types of language errors commonly amended by the students using the responding and correcting feedbacks in peer correction activities. The data was collected by collecting the written feedbacks in 25 argumentative essays of university students in the fifth semester. The results revealed that a number of 177 feedbacks were given for two types of errors: global and local errors. In correcting the global error, 75 feedbacks were provided, 50 by correcting feedbacks and 25 by responding feedbacks. Those feedbacks were given to correct errors in word choice, sentence structure, word order, omission, insertion, and unclear meaning. Meanwhile, in the local error, 102 feedbacks were provided from 88 by correcting feedbacks and 14 by responding feedbacks. Those feedbacks were given for errors in verb tense, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, word form, subject verb agreement, and singular and plural noun. Peer correction positively improves students' writing ability because one of the characteristics of the technique is to involve the students in finding the mistakes in their friends' writings. This activity trains them in being aware of their own writing errors.

Keywords: *language errors, global errors, local errors, written feedbacks.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing ability is a requirement for every student who deals with academic activity. In order to graduate from college, students are obliged to write essays, articles and theses in the process. For those who are in the English major, writing English with the correct language usage is essential. In this case, teaching writing is undeniably important to support the students in accomplishing their goals, especially

EFL students. In accordance with that fact, many teachers try to execute various teaching strategies to help their students improve their writing ability. Among these strategies is the implementation of peer correction activity. This activity has been proven as an effective technique in teaching writing (Lin & Chien, 2009). It enables the students to think critically and be aware of their own mistakes in writing. As asserted by Chen (2009), feedback from peer is an essential part in writing which trains the students to focus on different stages of writing, raises their awareness of their ability to think about what they are doing, and identifies their action to improve their writing.

Regarding to the importance of feedbacks, Hattie and Timperley (2007) assert that feedback is information provided by an agent such as a teacher, peer, book, parent, and self-experience, regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. In this case, some researchers have studied the types of the feedbacks. Harmer (2007) defines it as responding and correcting feedback. Responding feedback has been further categorized by Hyland and Hyland (2001) as praise, criticism, and suggestion, by Brown (2001) as sharing knowledge and negotiation, by Williams and Jacobs (2004) as support, by Hedge (2000) as consultation and by Yau, et al. (2003) as appreciation. Meanwhile, the correcting feedback has been further categorized by Hendrickson (1984) as coded and uncoded feedback.

Moreover, in the implication of responding and correcting feedbacks used in peer correction further uphold two types of errors in writing namely global and local error (Ferris, 2011). Accordingly, this is the focus of this present paper. The finding of this research is hoped to give positive input to teachers in applying peer correction in teaching writing, especially to EFL students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Student-centered and self-determining concepts in the modern and democratic pedagogy bring about peer correction as a technique which gives the students freedom and independence (Lin & Chien, 2009). By applying peer correction and giving feedback in the class, students are able to experience their weaknesses and similar problems in their own writing (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). It makes them feel less intimidated by correcting each other's work (British Council, 2011). As the main factors in the learning and teaching process (Brown, 1994; Gipps, 1994) feedback from peer also motivates the learners to write for an audience, trains them to assess their own writing and creates it with better quality and higher accuracy (Polio, 2001). It also provides the sense of confidence for the learners by the high level potential of responses and interactions among classmates by way of a collaborative and friendly dialogue in which set the two-way feedback up and negotiate the thinking between two-sides (Rollinson, 2005).

Responding Feedback

As a part of peer correction, responding feedback plays a crucial role in the teaching learning process. When reviewing the first draft of the writing, every student is required to offer responses to each other's works by stating comments

(Bartels, 2003; Harmer, 2007). They are demanded to write their ideas by responding to the mistakes produced by their friends. Ellis (2009) asserts that by providing the correct form of error correction, it can inform the learners about how to correct their errors with explicit guidance. In addition, the response may be divided into several categories, namely sharing knowledge and negotiation (Brown, 2001), support (Williams & Jacobs, 2004), consultation (Hedge, 2000) and appreciation (Yau, et al., 2003), praise, criticism, and suggestion (Hyland & Hyland, 2001).

To be objectively helpful for the students' writers in using correct language structure, responding feedbacks, as stated by Ferris (2011), is effectively encouraging the students to improve their writing ability especially for short term study. It is because the comments provide revisions to be applied in their writing.

Correcting Feedback

As coined by Harmer (2007), correcting feedback is a type of feedback which requires the reviewers to respond the error by marking it with symbols. Ellis (2009) emphasizes that the students do not receive any responses as the correct form. Yet, they only indicate the error by several marks and symbols. Related to that statement, Hendrickson (1984) divides two kinds of correcting feedback: uncoded and coded feedback. The uncoded feedback is the feedback that indicates errors by underlining or circling. Meanwhile, coded feedback is the feedback that specifies the errors by providing several codes or symbols without any comments.

By pointing the errors with underlines, circles, or symbols, correcting feedbacks has positive impact in improving students' language accuracy in composing articles. Ferris (2011) mentions that it is highly encouraging the students in composing their writing in most cases because it heads to greater cognitive engagement, reflection, and problem-solving.

Kinds of Error

According to Ferris (2011), the types of errors in writing are divided into two categories: global and local error. Global error is the errors that interfere with the comprehensibility of text. In this type, the components of errors included are those which are related to the ideas understanding such as content, idea, and organization, which also influenced by word choice, sentence structure, word order, and missing words (omission), or the used of unnecessary word (insertion). Meanwhile, local error is the errors which do not interfere the understanding of the text. This error has influences on some language aspects such as verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement, article usage, plural-singular noun, word form, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

METHOD

This research was conducted at the Study Program of English Education at Syiah Kuala University Banda Aceh. The data was from the written feedbacks 25 argumentative essays of university students in the fifth semester. These students are still studying in the Study Program of English Education in the University of Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh

The feedbacks were first analyzed into some categories: *sharing knowledge* (SK), *negotiation* (N), *support* (Sp), and *criticism* (Cr) in responding feedback, and *coded* (C), *uncoded* (U), and *combination of coded and uncoded* (CU) in correcting feedbacks. After categorizing the feedbacks, each feedback was further explored to see the aspects of language errors that were corrected by the students, whether it is in global error such as *word choice* (WC), *sentence structure* (SS), *word order* (WO), *omission* (Omi), *insertion* (Ins), and *unclear meaning* (UM), or in local error, such as *verb tense* (VT), *verb form* (VF), *capitalization* (Cp), *punctuation* (P), *spelling* (S), *word formation* (WF), *subject-verb agreement* (SVA), *plural and singular noun* (PSN) and *article usage* (AU).

RESULT

After analyzing the data, a number of 177 errors were corrected by the students which included both responding and correcting feedbacks. From those numbers of errors, 75 of them were the global errors, while the remaining 102 were the local errors. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The responding and correcting feedbacks in the global error.

Types of Feedbacks		Types of Error						Total
		WC	SS	WO	Omi	Ins	UM	
Responding	SK	-	2	-	1	1	3	7
	N	4	-	1	1	-	-	6
	Sp	3	4	-	-	-	3	10
	Cr	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total		7	8	1	2	1	6	25
Correcting	C	-	1	-	-	4	-	5
	U	2	3	-	1	3	-	9
	CU	13	6	1	3	13	-	36
Total		15	10	1	4	20	0	50
Total								75

In Table 1, correcting feedbacks were provided more in the global error. From 50 of these feedbacks, it was done to correct *insertion* error with 20 corrections, then followed by *word choice* error with 15 corrections, *sentence structure* error with 10 corrections, *omission* error with four corrections and the last one was *word order* error with one correction. Among those 50 correcting feedbacks, the most common feedback provided to correct the global error was in the form of the *combination of coded and uncoded* feedback with 36 feedbacks, while the least one was *coded* with 5 feedbacks.

Meanwhile, a number of 25 responding feedbacks were done by the students, in which eight feedbacks were written for the *sentence structure*, seven for *word choice*, six for *unclear meaning*, two for *omission*, and the remaining 2 for *word order* and *insertion* error. From those 25 responses, most of them were in the form of *support* with 10 feedbacks, while the least one was *criticism* with two feedbacks.

Table 2. The responding and correcting feedbacks in the local error.

Types of Feedbacks		Types of Error							Total
		VT	Cp	P	S	WF	SVA	PSN	
Responding	SK	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	4
	N	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	3
	Sp	1	-	6	-	-	-	-	7
	Cr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total		2	1	8	3	0	0	0	14
Correcting	C	1	-	1	-	1	-	2	5
	U	2	3	3	-	-	-	2	10
	CU	30	27	9	4	-	2	1	73
Total		33	30	13	4	1	2	5	88
Total									102

Similar to the global error, it was found that correcting feedback was also commonly offered in the local error. With the total numbers of 88 feedbacks, it was given mostly to mark the errors in *verb tense* with 33 feedbacks, followed by errors in *capitalization* with 30 feedbacks, *punctuation* with 13 feedbacks, *plural and singular noun* with five feedbacks, *spelling* with four feedbacks, *subject verb agreement* with two feedbacks, and finally *word form* error with one feedback. Among those 88 correcting feedbacks, *the combination of coded and uncoded* feedback was mostly given within the number of 73 feedbacks, while the very rarely offered one was in the form of *coded* feedbacks with only five corrections.

Furthermore, akin to the results in global error, responding feedback was also less given in the local error, with only about 14 feedbacks, in which most of them were to correct the *punctuation* error with eight feedbacks, followed by *spelling* error with three feedbacks, *verb tense* with two feedbacks, and *capitalization* with one feedback. While, there are no feedbacks given for responding to *word form*, *subject verb agreement*, and *plural and singular noun* error. In this result, the most responding feedback given was in the form of *support* with seven responses, and no comment of *criticism* was found.

DISCUSSION

The effectiveness of peer correction as in the results presented above continued to support the students in revising their writing. The 102 feedbacks found that were given to correct the local error which covered *verb tense*, *capitalization*, *punctuation*, *spelling*, *verb form*, *subject-verb agreement*, and *plural and singular noun* were corrected more by correcting feedbacks. This result occurred because those types of errors are easy to be identified and pointed out in their compositions. Furthermore, by marking it directly on the errors in the paper, the student writers will easily see the mistakes identified by their peers. On the other hand, in responding feedbacks, the writer needs to search which words that the reviewer pointed as the wrong one.

However, responding feedbacks are found to be much more helpful to the writers. Accordingly, as stated by Ellis (2009), the responding comments elaborate the mistakes in detail with suggestions, whilst the correcting feedback only points out the errors without any correction. Therefore, responding feedbacks make the students to think harder about the correction that needs to be made. In this case,

Ferris (2011) states that this feedback will affect the students' ability in the long term experience, because it will create their awareness and critical thinking.

CONCLUSION

This research claims that peer correction helps the students in correcting their own mistakes by reviewing others' writing. Some errors that focus both on the comprehensibility of the text and the use of the correct language structure can be fixed by training the students to apply peer correction. By providing the feedbacks on each other's paper, peer correction encourages them to write their own writing with better quality and accuracy.

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