**Developing a Teaching Model through Students-selected Topics and Implicit Corrective Feedbacks in Teaching Writing**

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**Abstract**

Many studies on students-selected topic have been conducted to investigate the effect of selected topics on students’ writing performance. However, in its implementation, students-selected topics still have some weaknesses in improving students’ writing performance. Students still have difficulties in choosing their topics and also the quality of students’ performance is still low due to no feedbacks given to students’ writing works. The current study investigated how students-selected topics and implicit corrective feedbacks affected performance in writing aspects. This study was conducted with 68 first grade senior high school students: 34 students were assigned as the control group and 34 students as the experimental group. The findings revealed that all writing aspects improved after the implementation of students-selected topics and implicit corrective feedbacks, except in the area of content. The empirical evidence suggests that students-selected topics help students in choosing their own topics and expressing their ideas; while implicit corrective feedbacks help students in recognizing their mistakes in writing process and in revising the mistakes. Suggestions for further research are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Students-selected topic, implicit corrective feedback, writing aspects.

**Introduction**

Writing is a skill required in many contexts, especially in academic field. For instance, writing is the most used skill in evaluating students’ performance in almost all levels of education (Afrin, 2016). However, the capability of Indonesian students in writing is still low. According to Aryanika (2016), some students feel hard to write, because they not only have low vocabulary mastery but also have the low motivation in writing and seldom build their confidence in writing it. There are some factors affecting students’ writing difficulty in Indonesia. It includes the differences of culture, structural, and grammatical terms between Indonesian language and English. Ariyanti (2016) states that it is quite difficult to master writing, especially for EFL students in Indonesia, since there are some differences between Indonesian languageand English such as structural and grammatical terms and styles. Furthermore, another factor affecting students difficulty in writing is dealing with grammar and vocabulary. English Foreign Language (EFL) students have to use the correct English grammar and vocabulary, apply the writing skills they have learnt, and incorporate these knowledge with their previous experience on the topic given when writing.

Considering difficulties in writing such as expressing ideas, students are able to develope their ideas to write when they are familiar with the topic. Sujannah and Cahyono (2017) state that when students are familiar with the topic and have sufficient background knowledge about the topic, they can organize and develop their ideas well. Student-selected topics also allows students to explore and express their ideas and thoughts freely. However, it is also reported that some students are hard in selecting a topic and expressing their ideas in English due to insufficient vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Grogan and Lucas (2013) argue that some students struggle to choose a topic and even those who have managed to decide on a topic find it difficult to express their ideas in English due to insufficient vocabulary and less grammatical knowledge. Furthermore, Takinami (2018) states that students have difficulty to express themselves in English due to students’ inadequate proficiency in English and their limited vocabulary. It means that the original process of student-selected topic is less effective because students still have difficulty in finding a topic and due to their insufficient vocabulary and grammatical knowledge which leads students to often make mistakes in writing. According to Liu (2008), there were four categories of mistakes on the paragraph level, namely paragraph development, coherence, unity, and inconsistency in point of view. In this case, the paragraph level deals with content and also organization.

Furthermore, some studies on student-selected topics suggest that in improving quality of students writing, especially on vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, there should be a corrective feedback given to students towards their writing. Takinami (2018) states that other factors that influence students’ writing performance also need to be investigated, for instance, feedback. The statement is supported by Grogan and Lucas (2013), corrective feedback is necessary for improving written fluency. Moreover**,** Burstein, Chodorow, and Leacock (2004) assure that the best way for learners to improve their writing is to write, receive feedback, revise depending on the feedback, and finally repeat the whole process as often as possible.

Moreover, there are two kinds of corrective feedback, explicit and implicit corrective feedback. According to Noroozizadeh (2009), explicit corrective feedback refers to the correct form being provided by the teacher for students and requires students to transcribe the correction into the revised version of the text. On the contrary, implicit corrective feedback refers to an indication on the part of the teacher that there is an error without providing the correct form for students. Moreover, many researchers argue that implicit feedback is more effective than explicit feedback. Clements (2010) and Elashri (2013) state that explicit feedback leaves no work for learners to do and no chance for them to think about the errors. Rewriting teacher’s correction is a passive action that does not teach students how to recognize or correct errors on their own. According to the problems faced by Indonesian students in writing dealing with structural and grammatical terms and styles. There were some studies of implicit corrective feedback on writing. Nooroozizadeh (2009), on her results, it shows that implicit corrective feedback shows a good performance in terms of identifying eight errors, namely verb form, preposition, number agreement, conjunction, pronoun, noun, adjective, and adverb. However, Srichanyachon (2011) argues that students with low level of writing proficiency may be unable to recognize and correct errors even when they become aware of their location.

Concerning to the issues above, dealing with students difficulty in writing especially in choosing the topic and improving their vocabulary and grammar, in this study the researcher provides some topics based on the descriptive text to help students in choosing the topic. According to Pardiyono (2006), descriptive text is about description of something or someone that consist of characteristics. Furthermore, dealing with students’ difficulty in recognizing and correcting the mistakes, the researcher provides the explanations of each code used in correcting students’ writing implicitly. In this study, the researcher intends to investigate the effect of students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback on writing aspects. Since writing aspects is important to help students perform better in writing. According to Jacob (1981), there are five aspects of writing, namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Content deals with the knowledgeable of the content, substantive, and relevancy of the topic sentence to the thesis statement. Organization is about the fluent expression, ideas, succinct, well-organized, logic, and cohesive. Vocabulary is about the choice of words and idioms, word form mastery, and register. Furthermore, language use deals with errors, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, and prepositions. The last, mechanics deal with spelling, punctuations, and capitalization. For this purpose, the researcher proposed a research question as follows:

What aspect of writing performs better after the implementation of students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback?

**2. Methods**

This study is a quantitative study with control group pre-test post-test design conducted at SMAN 13 Bandar Lampung in Indonesia. This study was conducted on five meetings. The researcher conduct the pretest in the first meeting, the second and third meetings were for the treatment of students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback, and the posttest was done in the fourth and fifth meeting.

2.1 Participants

The subject of this research were the tenth grade students at SMA N 13 Bandar Lampung. There were 68 students chosen as the sample of this study. Thirty four students in control group and thirty four students in experimental group. The reasons of choosing the participants was because the tenth grade students in Senior High School had studied English proficiency since they were in elementary school and they also had studied descriptive text in Junior High School. Furthermore, the samples of this study come from the homogenous and normally distributed samples.

2.2. Instrument

In this study, writing test was used to investigate the students’ writing performance. The tests were conducted twice, they were during the pre-test and post-test. In the pretest and posttest the students would be asked to write two paragraphs of descriptive text. The writing scoring rubric assessment used was adapted from the rubric proposed by Jacobs et al. (1981). This scoring system has four aspects, namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data collected from the study was statistically analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21.0. The average scores from Rater 1 and Rater 2 were computed to get the students’ final scores of students’ pre-test and post-test. The data of students’ writing test obtained were calculated before and after treatment. Paired samples T-test was used to compare means score from the result of pre-test and post-test of students writing test in order to find out the writing aspect performed best after the implementation of students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback.

**Results and Discussions**

The fulfillment of the statistical assumptions was done to test the homogeneity and normality of the data collected. In the homogeneity testing, the results showed that the observed significant levels for Levene’s test of both the experimental and control groups in the pre-test and the post-test were .439 and .352, respectively. In other words, the observed significant levels were greater than .05 (.439 ≥ .05 and .352 ≥ .05), meaning that the two groups were homogeneous. In the normality testing, the results showed that the observed significant levels for One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of the experimental group in the pre-test and the post-test were .595, respectively. Respectively. It meant that the observed significant levels were greater than .05 (.595 ≥ .05). Those results showed that the data taken from the samples were homogeneous and normally distributed. Furthermore,

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Writing Aspects in Control Group

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Writing Aspects | | Mean | N | Gain | Sig. |
| Pair 1 | Pretest Content | 48,91 | 34 | 2.12 | .000 |
| Posttest Content | 51,03 |  |  |  |
| Pair 2 | Pretest Organization | 33,35 | 34 | 0.94 | .000 |
| Posttest Organization | 34,29 |  |  |  |
| Pair 3 | Pretest Vocabulary | 31,18 | 34 | 1.41 | .000 |
| Posttest Vocabulary | 32,59 |  |  |  |
| Pair 4 | Pretest Language Use | 32,47 | 34 | 0.71 | .000 |
| Posttest Language Use | 33,18 |  |  |  |
| Pair 5 | Pretest Mechanics | 6,76 | 34 | 1.15 | .000 |
| Posttest Mechanics | 7,91 |  |  |  |

Table 1 shows that all the writing aspects significantly increased, including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. From the table above, it shows each mean of writing aspect and the increase can be seen from the range. In this study, content has the biggest increase with 2.12, the second is vocabulary with 1.41, followed by mechanics with 1.15, organization with 0.94, and the last is language use with 0.71. In addition, all writing aspects increased after being taught by using students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback. Content became the writing aspect which performed best and language use has the smallest increase among all the aspects.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Writing Aspects in Experimental Group | | | | | | |
| Writing Aspects | | Mean | N | Gain | Sig. |
| Pair 1 | Pretest Content | 50,29 | 34 | 2.12 | .000 |
| Posttest Content | 52,41 |  |  |  |
| Pair 2 | Pretest Organization | 34,41 | 34 | 2.03 | .000 |
| Posttest Organization | 36,44 |  |  |  |
| Pair 3 | Pretest Vocabulary | 32,12 | 34 | 2,14 | .000 |
| Posttest Vocabulary | 34,26 |  |  |  |
| Pair 4 | Pretest Language | 33,03 | 34 | 5,21 | .000 |
| Posttest Language | 38,24 |  |  |  |
| Pair 5 | Pretest Mechanics | 5,26 | 34 | 3,59 | .000 |
| Posttest Mechanics | 8,85 |  |  |  |

Table 2 shows that all the writing aspects significantly increased, including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. From the table above, it shows each mean of writing aspect and the increase can be seen from the gain. In this study, language use has the biggest increase with 5.21, the second is mechanic with 3.59, followed by vocabulary with 2.14, content with 2.12, and the last is organization with 2.03. In addition, all writing aspects increased after being taught by using students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback. Language use became the writing aspect which performed best and organization has the smallest increase among all the aspects.

Table 3. Writing Aspects’ Gain between Control Group and Experimental Group

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Writing Aspects | Gain in the Control Group | Gain in the Experimental  Group | Gain |
| Content | 2.12 | 2.12 | 0 |
| Organization | 0.94 | 2.03 | 1,09 |
| Vocabulary | 1.41 | 2.14 | 0.73 |
| Language Use | 0.71 | 5.21 | 4,5 |
| Mechanics | 1.15 | 3.59 | 2,44 |

From the table above, it shows that after the implementation of students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback, by comparing control group and experimental group, language use has the biggest increase which is 4.5. In the other hand, the implementation of students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback does not affect the content.

**Discussions**

The main goal of this study was to provide some information regarding the effect of students-selected and implicit corrective feedback on five writing aspects, which are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The findings of this study revealed all writing aspects in control group significantly increased after being taught by using students-selected topic. In the control group, content had the highest increase compare to other writing aspects, while language use had the smallest increase. According to Jacob (1981), content deals with the knowledgeable of the paragraph and the content has to be relevant to assigned topic. With regard to student-selected topic, on this implementation, students allowed to choose topic freely so that they can express their ideas, since they have background knowledge of the topic. Sujannah and Cahyono (2017) state that when students are familiar with the topic and have sufficient background knowledge about the topic, they can organize and develop their ideas well. However, in the control group language had the smallest increase compared to other aspects. Jacob (1981) states that language use deals with errors, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, and prepositions. In this case, students still have difficulty especially in dealing with errors. It happened due to students’ low mastery in grammar and also vocabulary. It suggests that although students understand the topic, they still have difficulty in expressing ideas in English, in which it often leads students to make mistakes in writing. It is in line with Grogan and Lucas (2013), they argued that although students managed to decide on a topic find it difficult to express their ideas in English due to insufficient vocabulary and less grammatical knowledge.

Moreover, all writing aspects in experimental group also significantly increased. However, different from the control group, in experimental group language use became the writing aspect which performed best and organization has the smallest increase among all the aspects. By comparing the writing aspects’ gain between control group and experimental group, language use also had the biggest increase while there was no gain on content after the implementation of students selected topic and implicit corrective feedback. According to Jacob (1981), language use deals with errors, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, and prepositions. In this case, language use also dealing with grammar which affects students’ writing performance. Students mostly mistyped, use incorrect pronouns, word order, and also articles. Students mostly mistyped, use incorrect pronouns, word order, and also articles. In pronouns, students sometimes still get confused with the use of she and he and also they still got confused with use of article a. Most of them know the concept but they forget and sometimes do not know how to use the words appropriately. So when they received implicit feedback, they recognize their mistakes easily. Implicit corrective feedback helped them to use their critical thinking to revise the mistakes. It is in line with the previous research of noroozizadeh (2009), the results of her study shows that implicit corrective feedback shows a good performance in terms of identifying 8 error categories which are verb form, preposition, number agreement, conjunction, pronoun, noun, adjective, and adverb.

Furthermore, although students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback helped students to improve their writing’s performance especially in finding ideas and revising language use, mechanics, and vocabulary, it did not give a big impact on the paragraph level. Since it is hard to correct students’ paragraph level mistakes implicitly. There must be clear explanation to the students, rather than giving feedback implicitly. According to Liu (2008), there were four categories of mistakes on the paragraph level, namely paragraph development, coherence, unity, and inconsistency in point of view. In this case, the paragraph level deals with content and also organization. According to Jacob (1981), organization in writing aspect deals with expression, ideas, logical sequencing, succinct, and cohesive. Furthermore, the reasons behind the mistakes are possibly lack of exposure to appealing texts where students can acquire vocabulary items according to their level. These mistakes were caused by limited vocabulary size, poor grammar knowledge and interference from the first language. It is in line with Ariyanti (2016), she stated that it is quite difficult to master writing, especially for EFL students in Indonesia, since there are some differences between Indonesian languageand English such as structural and grammatical terms and styles. Furthermore, another factor affecting students difficulty in writing is dealing with grammar and vocabulary. English Foreign Language (EFL) students have to use the correct English grammar and vocabulary, apply the writing skills they have learnt, and incorporate these knowledge with their previous experience on the topic given when writing.

Furthermore, this study also found that some students still find it difficult in revising their writing especially on the content and organization. Since content and organization deal with ideas and how they organize their writing in a clear, logical, and cohesive paragraph. This matter makes students confused in revising their writings when their writing were corrected implicitly without clear explanations. This finding support Srichanyachon (2012) result, that students with low level of writing proficiency may be unable to recognize and correct errors even when they become aware of their location.

**Conclusions**

This study investigated the effect of students-selected topic and implicit corrective feedback on five writing aspects, namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. It is found that all aspects of writing increased after the implementation of students selected topic and implicit corrective feedback, except content. In this study, language use had the biggest increase compared to other aspects. Implicit corrective feedback helped students to use their critical thinking to revise the errors. Therefore, the process of implicit corrective feedback becomes a part of the language learning process because students become able to diagnose their mistakes and correct them. However, some students still find it difficult in revising their mistakes in writing. Future researchers are advised not to deal with all mistakes at the same time in correcting students’ writing, two or three mistakes at a time may be a good idea to help students gradually get familiar with the mistakes and avoid them. Furthermore, this study also suggests future researchers to conduct the treatment longer, so that the students are more familiar with their mistakes.

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