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THE EFFECT OF DIRECT WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON STUDENTS' WRITING QUALITY IN RECOUNT TEXT

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Abstract: This study explores the impact of direct written corrective feedback on the writing quality of eighth-grade students. Using a quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design, 76 students from SMP Negeri 3 Sukawati were divided into an experimental group (VIII.A, 38 students) receiving direct feedback, and a control group (VIII.E, 38 students) receiving indirect feedback. The research employed a writing test as a pre-test and post-test instrument, following a sequence of pre-test, treatment, and post-test data collection. Statistical analysis, specifically an independent sample t-test with a significance level of p = 0.05, revealed a significant difference (t (74) = 2.335, p-value = .022 < p = 0.05) in writing quality between the two groups. This suggests that direct written corrective feedback was more effective than indirect feedback for eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Sukawati, particularly in improving recount text writing.

Keywords**:** corrective feedback; writing; recount text; experiment

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the productive skills for English language students to express thoughts, ideas, opinions, and facts (Damanik, 2022). However, writing requires students to retain the vocabulary and grammatical structures they have learned, making it a crucial skill for thorough comprehension (Amalia et al., 2021). According to AlMarwani (2020), when learning to write, students must adhere to a few writing-process phases. Because writing is a skill that cannot be isolated from the process, students often find it challenging to learn and master (Lim & Renandya, 2020; Rizky Amalia et al., 2021).

According to Brown & Lee (2015), writing requires a variety of talents, including the ability to think, draft, and revise. Lim & Renandya (2020) found that writing is the hardest skill for students in foreign languages because it involves complex aspects, and students struggle to present and structure ideas in understandable language. One text type that students learn to write, especially in the eighth grade, is the recount text. A key characteristic of recount text, among other texts, is that students are instructed to arrange their writing around their story (Aprilina et al., 2022). When writing recount text, students must regard the generic structure and language features as an important prop (Rizky Amalia et al., 2021).

However, Aulia & Bram (2020) found that students still make some mistakes, although they can form basic sentences. Because students are urged to write down their thoughts and ideas, they must expend more effort during the writing process (Ahmadi et

al., 2019). Moreover, in the study by Toba et al. (2019), students express their thoughts in writing without thinking about whether they write correctly or incorrectly.

Fitriana & Nurazni (2022) found that teachers do not correct students before returning their writing tasks. Miatin & Wiedarti (2019) found that teachers did not focus on the student writing process because they assumed writing was not as essential as other skills. However, Huang & Renandya (2020) found that one routine for investigating students' potential in exploring a second language is giving feedback by correcting students' errors.

Giving feedback is an effective way for students to learn to write because they improve by learning what they do not know and becoming aware of their errors (Waluyo & Rofiah, 2021; Fitriana & Nurazni, 2022). Feedback in writing can cover a variety of aspects, such as content, composition, structure, and style (Suharyanti & Fauziati, 2020). A study by Saragih et al. (2021) found that positive perceptions of feedback can help students improve their writing skills because teachers remind students of their writing mistakes. In line with Ekinci & Ekinci (2020), feedback is any information provided to a student about how well they performed on a learning assignment.

According to Schillings et al. (2021), there are two ways to provide feedback, namely written and oral. This study focuses on written corrective feedback because it examines feedback offered in written form. Based on Ellis's (2009) explanation, written corrective feedback is classified into six forms: direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, metalinguistic corrective feedback, focus feedback, electronic corrective feedback, and reformulation.

Written corrective feedback significantly affects the learning process and performance, although the influence can either be positive or negative (Isnawati et al., 2019). Written corrective feedback can help students in developing a second language (Yousefi & Nassaji, 2021). However, some students have difficulty receiving feedback because their cognitive ability is low and the feedback is incomprehensible (Kham Thi & Nikolov, 2021). This implies that giving feedback to students can still be challenging for some researchers and teachers in teaching writing.

Nevertheless, there is debate about whether written corrective feedback is more suitable and preferred by students. As a central part of second language acquisition, the effects of written corrective feedback are still a controversial issue in second language acquisition (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2017). A study by Waluyo & Rofiah (2021) indicates that teachers' feedback has a limited impact on students' writing abilities because it is not appropriate for long-term use. In Mafulah (2021), direct corrective feedback is ineffective in improving students' writing performance. According to Isnawati et al. (2019), written corrective feedback does not affect the efficiency of students' writing. Students still experience misunderstanding in responding to their teachers' feedback (Nemati et al., 2017).

Despite the controversy, written corrective feedback generally helps students increase their awareness of writing correctness (Lim & Renandya, 2020). Many

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arguments have been made about the effect of direct written corrective feedback. According to Alkhawajah (2022), direct written corrective feedback refers to evaluating students' mistakes and identifying the extent to which students are errors. Direct written corrective feedback has an important role in the teaching-learning process (Ganapathy et al., 2020). In line with Reynolds & Teng (2021), direct written corrective feedback provides feedback on students' strengths and weaknesses in word-choice errors. Moreover, Sabarun (2020) also found that direct corrective feedback influences students' motivation to improve their writing. According to Zohra & Hamitouche (2022), students tend to receive direct corrective feedback as their correction. Students mentioned that this feedback provides the correct form and is very beneficial because they can learn from it repeatedly.

Reviews from previous studies on the effect of direct written corrective feedback on students' writing quality show inconclusive results. This condition is considered as the gap that need to be filled in. This study sought to contribute to this gap by investigating the effect of direct written corrective feedback on recount text quality that is produced by junior high school students. The contribution will be proven based on the recount text quality differences between those produced based on direct written corrective feedback and those produced based on indirect written corrective feedback among eighth-grade junior high school students. Therefore, the formulation of the problem is *"Do students who get direct written corrective feedback produce better writing quality than those who are given indirect written corrective feedback?"*

METHOD

This study applied a quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design. This study was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Sukawati, Gianyar, Bali. The sample was selected using cluster-convenience sampling. According to Gall et al. (2003), convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are selected based on similar characteristics and availability at a given time (p. 175), and since the selected sample is a group of students, this is considered as cluster sampling. There are two intact classes that were allowed to participate in this study. A total of seventy-six students participated in this study. The experimental group received direct written corrective feedback, and the control group received indirect written corrective feedback. The data collection procedure was pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The writing scoring rubric used to assess students' writing quality in both the pre-test and post-test was adapted from Brown & Lee (2015, pp. 456-457). The lesson plans for the treatments were based on the eighth-grade syllabus and curriculum. The writing activities in this study followed the pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing process. The corrective feedback was given during the revising stages.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to find out the statistical difference on students' writing quality between students who were given direct written corrective feedback and students who were given

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indirect written corrective feedback at eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Sukawati. The data was analyzed through descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Students of VIII-A which consisted of 38 students were the experimental group. The students had to write recount text as the writing task, furthermore, in the next meeting students obtained the treatment for two times. The treatment in the experimental group was direct written corrective feedback. After giving the treatment, the researcher conducted the post-test. Table IV.1 is the result of the pre-test, post-test, and gain scores from experimental group.

Table 1. Gain scores of Experimental Group

Test	n	Min	Max	M	SD
Pre-test	38	30	75	53.03	11.36
Post-test	38	55	95	74.21	10.49

Based on table above, showed the difference in the mean scores of experimental group from pre-test was 53.03 and post-test was 74.21. In pre-test score, the minimum score was 30 and the maximum score was 75. Meanwhile, in post-test score, the minimum score was 55 and the maximum score was 95. It indicated the students' writing had the improvement.

Table 2. Gain scores of Control Group

Test	n	Min	Max	M	SD
Pre-test	38	30	75	51.18	13.38
Post-test	38	50	95	68.16	12.05

Based on the table above showed the difference in the mean scores of control group from pre-test was 51.18 and post-test was 68.16. In pre-test score, the minimum score was 30 and the maximum score was 75. Meanwhile, in the post-test score, the minimum score was 50 and the maximum score was 95. It also indicates the students' writing had the improvement.

Table 3. Post-test Scores Difference Between Experimental Group and Control Group

Post-test	n	Min	Max	M	SD
Experimental	38	55	95	74.21	10.49
Control	38	50	95	68.16	12.05

Based on the result of post-test scores difference between experimental group and control group, it showed that the students which received direct written corrective feedback have better writing quality than students which received indirect written corrective feedback. It is supported by the result of mean scores from experimental group was 74.21 and mean scores from control group was 68.16. It implied that mean scores from experimental group were higher than mean scores from control group.

Inferential Statistical Analysis

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In this part, the researcher used the t-test formula for analysing the post-test scores difference between experimental and control groups. It was necessary to find out the result of normality and homogeneity data before calculating T-test value and finding the difference of significant level. Normality test was used to find out whether the data was normally distributed or not. Based on the table of Shapiro-Wilk, the significance data of pre-test in experimental group was .198, and control group was .065. The significance score that was higher than p = 0.05, it suggested that the data of pre-test is normally distributed. Furthermore, the result of significance data of post-test in experimental group is .120 and control group is .067. It can be determined that the result of post-test is normally distributed because the normality test from both classes was higher than p = 0.05. The first assumption had been successfully fulfilled.

To fulfil the assumption of homogeneity of variance, the researcher used Levene statistics to determine whether the data was homogeneous or not. The data were homogenous if the result of the data is higher than p = 0.05. The result of the homogeneity analysis of data from pre-test between experimental and control groups was .261. It indicated that the data was F (1,74) =1.28, p = .261 which means the data of pre-test was homogenous. It was also true for the data set of post-test result between experimental and control groups. The homogeneity analysis indicated that the data was F (1,74) = 1.14, p = .290 which means the data of post-test was homogenous. It can be determined that the second assumption had been successfully fulfilled.

The calculation of the result of normality test of post-test was normal and the result of homogeneity test of post-test was homogenous. It indicated that the first and second assumptions had been successfully fulfilled. It implied this study could utilize parametric statistics because the result of post-test score was normal and homogenous It means that the requirement to conduct independent sample t-test has already been fulfilled. Further, the researcher would analyse the score of post-test by using independent sample t-test to obtain the data in order to know the significance of the students' scores.

After determining the normal and homogeneous data, the researcher used independent sample t-test to analyse the score. The purpose of using independent sample t-test is to find out the significant differences between students' writing quality in experimental and control groups. The result of independent sample t-test can be seen from the recapitulation of the data as follows.

According to the analysis, the result of students' post-test from the independent t-test revealed a significant difference between the mean score from the experimental group which received direct written corrective feedback *(M= 74,21, SD = 11.49)* meanwhile the control group which received indirect written corrective feedback *(M = 68.16, SD = 12.05)*. The data result of the independent sample t-test pointed out that t (74) = 2.34, p = .022 which means that there is a statistically significant difference between students' mean scores from experimental and control group eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Sukawati. Based on the result of t-test, it signified the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. It implied that students who received direct written corrective feedback produce better writing quality than students who received indirect written corrective feedback.

Based on the reflection session in the end of meeting, the researcher and students were discussing of students' experiences during the treatment, the researcher found that students had positive enthusiasm for obtaining feedback. Students were used to learning the correct form from their previous writing. Further, students would remember some feedback and implement it in the next writing. Students found the correct form from feedback and get used to the appropriate form of writing. The treatment made students easier for memorize the correct form.

They felt relief in overcoming writing difficulties because feedback guides them to write properly. It means that giving direct written corrective feedback and indirect written corrective feedback give an effect on students' writing quality, especially for eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Sukawati. This study's outcomes was supported by the study findings from Sabarun (2020) said that direct corrective feedback influenced students' feeling to do improvement in writing. Sabarun (2020) detected feedback from teachers as important support and students believed that feedback could change their habits in writing better.

Even though direct written corrective feedback and indirect written corrective feedback gave a significant effect, however, the treatment of direct written corrective feedback produce better writing quality than indirect written corrective feedback. Based on the students' interaction during the reflection session, the result of this study found that students needed an explanation from the researcher or teacher and correct errors for students to understand and made sure the correction was written. Furthermore, due to the limited students' grammar knowledge, students could not correct their errors, especially in indirect written corrective feedback, and students tended to need direct written corrective feedback. Direct written corrective feedback tended to remind students to observe their error and some words that are missed. The effect of direct written corrective feedback could motivate students to write better. Ganapathy et al., (2020) said direct corrective feedback was part of an important role for students' writing because without feedback students will not know the progress of writing. Based on Ganapathy et al., (2020) students felt after being given feedback, students write better phrases and paragraphs and reduce the number of errors they made. Furthermore, there was also a similar result in the study by Zohra & Hamitouche (2022), students were helped by the correct form provided by the teacher through direct written corrective feedback. Students felt that teacher feedback could give them understanding because the teacher give the highlight in error word and provided the correction. Zohra & Hamitouche (2022) said through their questionnaire that students prefer to get direct written corrective feedback because students could learn many times in their writing.

Thus, from this study can be concluded that feedback especially direct written corrective feedback and indirect written corrective feedback are effective in students' writing. Students experienced progress in writing through feedback because it was corrected. The role of feedback can guide students to write better and regard writing as not a difficult skill. In line with Irfan (2020), direct written corrective feedback could train students to think and search for the correct form of the error they made. Furthermore, based on the study by Reynolds & Teng, (2021) direct written corrective feedback could attract students' attention to the feedback given because students focus on language learning after there are corrective for students to be more motivated to analyze word choices in their writing. In the study of Reynolds & Teng (2021), direct written corrective feedback minimized the choice of verb-noun collocation word errors and grammar errors. Khaki & Tabrizi (2021), detected direct written corrective feedback as the explicit information or correction for students thought that this feedback is an effective way.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that direct written corrective feedback produced better writing quality than indirect written corrective feedback. The result showed that direct written corrective feedback supported students' writing. As the skill that requires the product of written work, direct written corrective feedback was beneficial for students in learning writing. Students had more confidence in writing because they knew the appropriate form after being given direct written corrective feedback. This study is fit for investigating the condition of students' writing because the result provided the progress of their writing. In line with the quasi-

experimental study conducted by Sahmadan (2019), the effect of direct written corrective feedback contributed positively to students' writing accuracy, especially in the structure of language related to the content, organization, simple present tense, verb, vocabulary, and mechanics. The next quasi experimental study from Endley & Karim (2022), detected the effect of direct written corrective feedback gave an improvement in the use of prepositions. Furthermore, in the study by Soulmaz (2021), there were an improvement in the students' grammatical accuracy when students were given indirect written corrective feedback.

Although there are many studies supporting the current findings of this study, it still has many weaknesses. This study only investigates the effect of direct written corrective feedback and indirect written corrective feedback meanwhile other types of feedback can be observed in this study. Furthermore, the limitation of material, this study only focused on recount text because the eighth grade learned recount text. Whereas, many genres of text can be observed using feedback. Next the aspects that the researcher observed are still limited to only five aspects of writing furthermore other aspects of writing are unreachable. Many aspects of writing can be observed in further study. The last is the time, the researcher did not reach every student writing progress to get the correction intensely.

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that there were significant differences between students who received direct written corrective feedback and students who received indirect written corrective feedback. Students' impression in obtaining the feedback indicates that direct written corrective feedback and indirect written corrective feedback are effective in learning activities. Even though students who received direct written corrective feedback produced better writing quality than students who received indirect written corrective feedback.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that direct written corrective feedback leads to significantly higher recount text writing quality in eighth-grade students compared to indirect written corrective feedback. This advantage stems largely from the learners' developmental stage, where given their limited grammatical foundation, students benefit more from explicit teacher corrections that immediately clarify mistakes, relieve writing anxiety, and reinforce correct linguistic structures for future tasks. While both feedback strategies support student engagement and writing progress, direct feedback serves as a more actionable scaffolding tool for junior high school students working through complex language structures.

Despite these positive findings, the study has a few limitations that should be acknowledged. The research was restricted to recount texts and evaluated only five specific writing criteria over a limited timeframe. Additionally, time constraints made it difficult to monitor each student's revision process on a deeply individualized level, and the scope remained strictly focused on comparing two traditional forms of written feedback.

To build on these insights, future research should explore whether direct feedback produces similar benefits across different text genres, such as persuasive or expository writing, and across various grade levels. Researchers could also look into additional writing aspects, including coherence and vocabulary depth, or examine how digital and peer feedback compare with teacher corrections. Finally, conducting longitudinal studies with delayed post-tests would help determine if the writing gains achieved through direct feedback are maintained over the long term.

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