

The Effect of Corrective Feedback on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Ability

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Abstract

writing is one of the vital as well as challenging language skills that the students should be mastered in it (Yaseen, 2021). One of the tools that ESL teachers use for improving learners' writing is providing corrective feedback towards their writing (Pamungkas & Amroni, 2021). As mentioned by Lyster and Ranta (1997) there are six classifications of corrective feedback: direct corrective feedback, indirect corrective feedback, metalinguistic corrective feedback, focus on form corrective feedback, electronic feedback, and reformulation. The aim of the present study is to investigate the importance of providing corrective feedback in improving writing ability.

Key words: Writing ability, Corrective Feedback, Second Language Writing, English Academic Writing.

Introduction:

Among four language skills, writing is a skill that is more challengeable for students to be mastered in it and teachers as a facilitator should pave the way for students to improve their knowledge in this skill. Several elements have an impact on the quality of the writing. These elements should be explained briefly by the teachers at the beginning of the writing course to the learners and during the course, these elements should be implemented by the students.

As mentioned in the literature, the creativity of the teacher leads learners to the best level of learning (ALRowais, 2015). Several roles for the teachers are mentioned in the literature; one of the most classification of these roles are mentioned by Harden and Crosby (2000); in this classifications, the role of the teachers are mentioned in the six categories; they are as follows: teacher as a lecturer, teacher as a controller, teacher as a tutor, teacher as participants, teachers as an organizer, teacher as a promoter, teacher as a resource, and teacher as assessor (Harden & Crosby, 2000 as cited in ALRowais, 2015).

As mentioned above, one of the roles of the teachers in Language classes is “teacher as assessor” in which the teacher should assess the students’ performance regarding four language skills. There are two types of assessment are mentioned in the literature regarding writing skills; they are formative assessment and summative assessment. Then, the teachers should provide feedback to the learners’ writing to aware of their errors.

Importance and improvement of writing ability

As mentioned by Crystal (1997) English language is started to spread all over the world broadly and it is dominated in several essential fields such as communication, education, and commerce (Crystal, 1997 as cited in Sauhana, 2021). Writing skill frequently found as a challenging skill for students in EFL context to be mastered on it and at the same time, writing is a vital skill that the students have to master on it (Graham et al. 2005 as cited in Floranti & Adiantika, 2021).

Some scholars defined writing as a process in which the perspective and the opinions are found by the writers and a writer is a person who “materialized” these into “actual forms” (Raimes, 2003; Richard & Renandya, 2003; Moore-Hart, 2010 as cited in Floranti & Adiantika, 2021).

Several techniques are mentioned in the research that is used by the teachers to improve learners’ writing ability. As mentioned by Gonzalez and Correa Forero (2021) using formative assessment as portfolios cannot only become a cause for improving writing ability but also the finding of this research shows the improvement in reading skills. Due to the dependencies of writing and reading skills, Shokarimova (2021) states that writing instruction will be improved the reading skills and reading skills will be developed writing instruction.

Corrective Feedback

Bitchener & Ferris (2012) defined corrective feedback as information provided by the teachers about their errors of grammatical usage to the learners (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012 as cited in Sherpa, 2021). Khadawardi (2021) stated that corrective feedback is a reflection of other students or teachers on one’s writing (Khadawardi, 2021). As mentioned by many scholars (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Al Ajmi, 2015; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010 as cited in Khadawardi, 2021) the aims of providing corrective feedback are to develop their writing ability by aware the learners of the errors made by them in the process of writing (Khadawardi, 2021). Ferris (2004) states that the writing L2 process is in danger to fossilization threat and maybe hinder the ongoing developing learners’ writing ability Ferris, 2004 as cited in Khadawardi, 2021).

Role of Corrective Feedback in Writing

One of the most crucial roles of the language teacher in writing pedagogy is providing error treatment to the learners (Khadawardi, 2021). There are two perspectives regarding corrective feedback; some scholars (e.g. Krashen, 1982; Schwartz, 1993; Truscott, 1999 as cited in Alsuhaibani, 2021) believe that providing corrective feedback can be harmful to second language learners but on the other hands, some others (e.g. Long, 2007; Schmidt, 2001 as cited in Alsuhaibani, 2021) believe that providing corrective feedback can be really helpful for students and it can improve their writing ability but as the research findings (Kang & Han, 2015; Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Mackey & Goo, 2007; Russell & Spada, 2006 as cited in Alsuhaibani, 2021) shows that providing corrective feedback can be very effective in students' learning and also, can create large effect size (Alsuhaibani, 2021). As mentioned by Hyland (2006) learners find corrective feedback if it has two features; at first, if it includes the "student writer" and second if the contextualization and needs of the learners are considered (Hyland, 2006 as cited in Listyani, 2021).

Two Classifications of Corrective Feedback

Two types of corrective feedback classifications are mentioned in the literature, they are as follows:

1. Six-type classification:

Lyster and Ranta (1997) classified corrective feedback into six classifications: (A) explicit correction, (B) recast, (C) clarification requests, (D) metalinguistic feedback, (E) elicitation, (F) repetition (Lyster and Ranta, 1997 as cited in Wu et al. 2021).

2. Two-type classification:

Ranta & Lyster (2007) stated two extensive classifications: (A) reformulations which include explicit correction and recast and (B) prompts which include classification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition (Lyster & Ranta, 1997 as cited in Wu et al. 2021).

The Findings of the Previous Study

Hashemian and Farhang-Ju (2018) try to investigate the effects of metalinguistic feedback on intermediate Iranian students' writing accuracy. The result obtained from the experimental group that received metalinguistic feedback and the control group which received no feedback shows that the metalinguistic feedback can improve the writing accuracy of experimental group members (Hashemian & Farhang-Ju, 2018).

Pamungkas and Amroni (2021) Try to investigate that the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in teaching writing. The findings of this study show that the written corrective feedback has a significant impact on the improvement of students' writing ability in terms of text content such as vocabulary, language use, and organization (Pamungkas & Amroni, 2021).

The study which conducted by Mansourizadeh and Abdullah (2014) tries to examine the effect of different type of metalinguistic corrective feedback on ESL students' writing ability. In this study, there are three groups of participants that one group is the written group which received a combination of oral and written metalinguistic feedbacks, the oral group received a combination of interactional and oral metalinguistic feedbacks and the interactional group that received metalinguistic feedback in the interactional activity. As a result, the three groups have an improvement in writing but the oral group improves more than the two others group.

The effect of giving corrective feedback on the performance of students in L2 writing classes has been studied by Khodi and Abbasi Sardari (2015). In this study, the experimental group received focused metalinguistic corrective feedback, and the control group received unfocused metalinguistic corrective feedback. The result obtained from the posttest of these two groups shows that giving focused feedback is more efficient than giving unfocused metalinguistic corrective feedback in writing classes.

Conclusion

Writing ability is one of the challenging skills among the four language learning skills and is a more complicated skill than the three others (Yaseen, 2021). O'Maggio (1986) claimed that writing ability is not a simple manner of writing something down on a paper; in fact, it is the capability to use appropriate lexical items, the correct form of structures, and the conventional relationship between these two which reflected in a matter of writing (O'Maggio, 1986 as cited in Zainuddin, 2004).

Providing corrective feedback towards learners' writing by teachers enable students to recognize the linguistic errors that they made in the process of writing (Pamungkas & Amroni, 2021). Abu Seileek and Abualsha'r (2014) mentioned that one of the essential tools for developing English Learning and English Teaching is to provide feedback to the learners' errors by teachers to aware them of their mistakes that they made (Abu Seileek and Abualsha'r, 2014 as cited in Pamungkas & Amroni, 2021).

There is enough evidence that can prove the positive impact of corrective feedback on learners' writing ability. Providing corrective feedback towards learners' writing by teachers enable students to recognize the linguistic errors that they made in the process of writing (Pamungkas & Amroni, 2021). This awareness helps students to understand and correct their mistakes in the process of writing.

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