

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter provides the background of the study, statements of the research problem, objectives of the study, research hypothesis, significance of the study, and operational definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

People usually have tendency to communicate with others to air their feelings, ideas, opinions and views. In addition to speaking, writing is often becoming the way to dispense this tendency. According to Syamsir (2016: 22) ‘writing is a kind of activity where the writer expresses all ideas in his mind in the paper from words to sentence, sentence to paragraph, and paragraph to essay’. In other words, writing can be defined as the activity of conveying one’s feeling, idea, opinion and view in a written form in order to communicate with others.

However, in academic context, especially in foreign language learning, writing is usually thought as the most challenging skill to be mastered. It can only be taught after introductory acquaintance with elements of language (Aghajanloo, 2016). Despite that writing comes late on the process of language acquisition, the need to acquire writing skill is still considered as important. Harmer (2006) stressed out that ‘writing is recognized as the important skill to

be taught to English foreign language students'. Moreover, writing is also commonly seen as the most challenging language skill for foreign language learners to master compared to either listening, speaking, or reading for the complex skill and competence involved in writing.

In Indonesian context, the national policy has acknowledged English as the first foreign language taught at schools. The teaching of English as foreign language for junior and high school students has the aim to create the Indonesian citizens who are able to communicate, both orally and written, using English as an effort to improve the national competitiveness amid global competition (Permendiknas, 2006). In that, writing becomes part of the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language and it must be taught in various levels of education, starting from elementary school to higher education.

In instructional pedagogy, the English teacher should view teaching writing as a process of learning even though it is usually seen as a product of learning that combines writer's grammatical and lexical knowledge (Hyland, 2003). According to Hayes and Kellog (1996), writing is rated as complex process that requires skillful coordination of large number of cognitive and linguistic processes and resources. Therefore, it is approved that writing is considered as the most challenging skill to be mastered by the English language learners.

Moreover, writing competences that should be formed in the classroom cover macro competences; such as using the rhetorical forms and conventions

of written discourse, conveying links and connections between events, as well as micro competences; such as producing an appropriate word order, and using acceptable grammatical system (Brown, 2004). Furthermore, Brown (1994: 320) states that teaching writing in the classroom should 'let the students to write and re-write as well as give them feedback throughout the composing process'. For sum, writing is a very essential skill in English language development as it covers many competences to master. It is also part of learning the language being acquired which always needs teacher's or instructor's guidance.

The purpose of the teaching of writing in the above mentioned level in Indonesia is to enable English Foreign Language (EFL) students to master functional and monologue texts in various forms of genre such as descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, and report (Depdiknas, 2006). The students are also expected to be well-organized as well as accurate on their writing especially when it is seen from the use of language structure, word choice, and mechanics.

In mostly instructional practices, however, problems related to writing accuracy are still frequently found in the students' writing. A study by Widiati (2003) revealed that the teaching of writing in Indonesian context has not been able to respond to the students' needs for different literacy ability. Study by Husin (2017: 237) further found that students have very low score on their writing viewed from their accuracy on the use of appropriate and acceptable structure in English. It, in fact, shows that the students' writing accuracy

competence is still being categorized not maximal and it may lead the teacher to confusion and frustration despite all of their efforts done to achieve the national goal. With the high demand of writing accuracy, the EFL teachers should help the students to solve this problem.

In response to the issue aforementioned above, many researchs proved that Corrective Feedback (CF) is very helpful and beneficial in improving students' writing accuracy. The study conducted by Bitcher & Knoch (2008) found that CF helps students to acquire and demonstrate mastery on the use of targeted linguistic forms and structures.

The concept of corrective feedback was first proposed by Schmidt (1990) along with his noticing hypothesis and emphasized by Swain (1995) with her output hypothesis which emphasized the importance of corrective feedback during learning the second or foreign language. Learner of second language can achieve language uptake by combining the noticing toward the language input and the negative feedback, term used in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) study to refer to correction feedback, during the process of language production (Ortega, 2009).

However, the study of Truscott (1996) denied the importance of corrective writing. He claimed that giving correction on students' language product was very harmful and it could decrease learners' motivation to learn. Long debates on it emerged afterwards, and a study by Ferris (1999) reported that students' writing accuracy demands correction and that the study on the effectiveness of CF should be addressed.

Corrective feedback has been proven to be very effective for students writing according to many studies. Feedback given on the grammatical errors that the L2 or foreign language learners make in their writing can lead to improve accuracy in new pieces of writing (Bithener & Ferris, 2012). Likewise, Hyland (2003:17) also pointed out that ‘providing feedback is one of the most important tasks of the teacher of writing’. Accordingly, corrective feedback is believed to be the effective strategy to assist the students’ to improve students’ literacy or writing skill.

In addition, L2 writing students want and expect their teachers to correct written errors (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Lee, 2004) rather than to receive written corrective feedback such as peer and oral feedback (Leki, 1991; Ferris, 1995). Students believe that a learning task is not complete without corrective feedback. Although there are various views on the impact of providing written corrective feedback on the improvement of L2 writing accuracy, both teachers and students feel the need for its use (Van Beuningen, 2010; Van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012).

Major learning theories; behaviorism, cognitive constructivism, and social constructivism, recognize feedback as an important aspect in learning and instruction (Septiana, 2014). As Williams and Burden (1997) assert, behavioral view of learning sees reinforcement as well as feedback has important effects on student learning. Similarly, cognitive constructivism places feedback as an essential element in language teaching as confirmed by a study involving university students by Baker and Bricker (2010) which reveals

that learners when they received feedback were slow but accurate in improving errors. Following the important role of feedback in learning, Brown (2007) suggests that teachers should sensitively apply methods of responding to and correcting students' writing which can begin in the drafting and revising stages, during which time it is more appropriate to consider errors.

The term Corrective Feedback, or simply error correction, refers to the way teachers react to learners written errors. As defined by Keh (cited in Septiana *et.,al*, 2016: 1), 'corrective feedback is the input given containing information for the revisions'. Corrective feedback, both oral and written, is an integral part of teaching (Ellis, 2009). Corrective feedback is an important part of second language writing because it allows of providing teacher to student interaction in L2 as well as foreign language writing class (Ferris, Pezone, Tade, & Tinti, 1997).

Many L2 and foreign language writing teachers feel that corrective feedback is influential in the improvement of their students' writing accuracy (Brown, 2007; Hyland & Hyland, 2006). In addition, in corrective feedback, which is given to the students' writing, there are some growing evidencse that it can play important roles on the students' linguistic accuracy (Ellis, 2009).

In writing, there are mainly two types of corrective feedback, namely, direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback. According to Beuningen et al (2008: 282), indirect corrective feedback only consists of indication of errors in the students' writing, while direct corrective feedback identifies both the errors and the target forms. Moreover, direct corrective

feedback, according to Srichanyachon (2012: 10), is given to the students by 'explicitly writing the correct forms of the students' errors while indirect corrective feedback is given to students' drafts by giving underlines, circles, codes, and other means without giving the target or the correct forms of the errors'. Direct corrective feedback is a common and conventional technique conducted by many teachers in order to give correction on the students' error.

Both direct and indirect corrective feedback promote different advantages for learner of second or foreign language. According to Hamidun (2012), direct corrective feedback could result in better writing performances of the students, especially those with low language proficiency. It is also revealed that direct corrective feedback was able to boost the students' positive attitude towards writing in English. Likewise, Farrokhi and Sattarpour (2012) found that direct corrective feedback was proven to give positive effect on students' accurate use of English articles. To conclude, direct corrective feedback is a strategy to give correction which is very useful especially for beginner level of language learner to overcome the difficulties of uncomplicated grammatical rules in writing.

In other hand, indirect corrective also provides some advantages for the learners. There are many studies reveal that the students taught using indirect corrective feedback can perform better than those taught using direct corrective feedback. Study by Beuningen & Kuiken (2008) reported that indirect corrective feedback is beneficial and has strong significant short-term effect for students' writing accuracy improvement.

Moreover, based on the study by Erlam (2013), indirect corrective feedback is effective for students to do self-repair on their grammatical error. It is very beneficial for low-intermediate EFL students to self-correct their grammatical error. Another effectiveness of indirect corrective feedback has been reported by Westmacott (2017) who added that indirect feedback can build the students' strong autonomy in writing. The students are having more chance to repair or correct the errors by themselves so that it can eventually build their awareness on the sentence structure of the English writing.

To sum up, indirect corrective feedback is another effective correction type which should be utilized by language teacher to assist their students to improve the students' writing.

As Hyland (2003) stated, writing is a means for grammar and structure reinforcement. Therefore, in order to have a good writing with high accuracy on grammar, word choice, and mechanic, the students should have good grammatical sensitivity. Grammatical sensitivity refers to the concept as the ability to distinguish grammatical functions. According to Carroll and Sapor (1959), grammatical sensitivity is the individual ability in defining the syntactical pattern of a sentence of a language. Accordingly, the students with good grammatical sensitivity will tend to avoid mistake in using syntactical pattern and they will be able to differentiate the ungrammatical sentences from that the grammatical ones.

Different students are believed to have different levels of grammatical sensitivity (Kormos, 2012). To know the level of students' grammatical

sensitivity, it is necessary to conduct an aptitude test such as Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) or the Language Aptitude Battery (LAB) (Krashen, 1981). Usually, those at a high level of grammatical sensitivity will show a better improvement in writing accuracy than those at a low level of grammatical sensitivity. However, MLAT and LAB are not effective to test the students' levels of grammatical sensitivity since it is deployed to test not only the grammatical sensitivity but also the overall language aptitude such as phonetic coding ability, inductive ability and verbal intelligence.

Moreover, Lightbown & Spada (1990) argue that MLAT and LAB reveal the performance on any foreign language which is not specific to English as a foreign language. In line with this argument, MLAT and LAB are not effective to be utilized to test the students' levels of grammatical sensitivity since it is not only inaccurate for the purpose of the present study, but also uneconomical. There is a certain fee to be paid to get the MLAT. Further, the permission in using MLAT in classroom context is very difficult to get. Along with these arguments, another strategy is proposed for the purpose of the present study to adapt the 'Error Recognition' part in TOEFL to test the students' levels of grammatical sensitivity. Sulistyono (2001) states that error recognition in Grammar and Written Expression in TOEFL assesses more on grammatical sensitivity than communicativeness of the expressions.

Many studies on CF have been conducted by many researchers. From the last ten years, there are many studies revealed that the students prefer to get correction from the teacher (Santos, 2010; Hyland, 2010; Jolita & Ramune,

2015; Rosdiana, 2016), rather than correction from their mates which is so called peer-feedback correction (Sanu, 2016). Moreover, studies by Salimi (2016), Nowbakht (2016), Khadijeh *et.,al* (2016), Kisnanto (2016), Syamsir (2016), Dilara & Ismail (2016), and Bobrova (2018) also have reported that indirect CF is effective in helping students to improve their writing accuracy. The students with indirect CF were able to outperform the students without indirect CF.

However, those studies are still lack on investigating the effectiveness of indirect CF on EFL students of senior high *pesantren*-based school setting as well as considering a psychological factor which may affect students' improvement, such as the different level of grammatical sensitivity that each individual may has. Thus, the present study aims to make larger contribution in CF research, especially by investigating the effect of the indirect corrective feedback on the accuracy improvement of senior high *pesantren*-based school students' writing. Moreover, the present study also has interest in finding the relationship between indirect corrective feedback and the students' level of grammatical sensitivity since the effect of grammatical sensitivity on students' writing is worth to investigate.

Referring to the background of study above, this study is intended to carry out a study to verify a theory by Beuningen & Kuiken (2008) stating that indirect corrective feedback is effective in improving the students' writing accuracy. Thus, current study will be conducted with the title: “**Indirect**

Corrective Feedback on Writing Accuracy of Students across Different Level of Grammatical Sensitivity”.

B. Statements of the Research Problem

On the basis of the background described above, the present study scrutinizes the answers to research questions expressed as follows:

- 1) Is there any difference in the writing accuracy between the students treated with indirect corrective feedback and those treated with direct corrective feedback?
- 2) Is there any difference in the writing accuracy of the students based on the different level of grammatical sensitivity?
- 3) Is there any interaction between indirect corrective feedback treatments on the students' writing accuracy and the students' level of grammatical sensitivity?

C. Objectives of the Study

Referring to the statements of research problem aforementioned, the objectives of this study are to find out whether or not:

1. There is any difference in the writing accuracy score between the students treated with indirect written corrective feedback and those treated with direct corrective feedback.
2. There is any difference in the writing accuracy score of the students based on the different level of grammatical sensitivity.

3. There is any interaction between indirect corrective feedback treatments and the students' level of grammatical sensitivity on the students' writing accuracy.

D. Research Hypothesis

As the tentative answers to the research problems, some hypotheses related to the problems are presented. The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

1. The students who are given indirect corrective feedback have significantly better writing accuracy than those who are given direct corrective feedback.
2. The students with high level of grammatical sensitivity have significantly better writing accuracy than those with low level of grammatical sensitivity.
3. There is an interaction between corrective feedback on writing accuracy and students' level of grammatical sensitivity.

E. Significance of the Study

Based on the formulated research questions previously expressed, this study is expected to give both theoretical and practical contributions;

1) Theoretical Contribution

Theoretically, the result of this research is expected to give supported theory of teaching writing concerning on the use of indirect corrective feedback on writing accuracy of *pesantren* based school students. Indirect Corrective Feedback is an effective strategy in improving writing accuracy

of the eleventh grade students of SMA Mamba's Sholihin Blitar. The students of *pesantren* based school are 24/7 hours living in the *pesantren*. They have limitation in using learning technology such as laptop and smartphone. In their daily learning, they only rely on paper and pen as the tools for study. Indications as correction strategy given by the teacher motivates the students to do self repair. Their autonomy in learning by directly experiencing to correct the error triggers the students' noticing toward the errors and the language input so that they can produce better language uptake.

2) Practical Contribution

The research findings of this study would give some beneficial ideas for students, English teachers, as well as other researchers.

a. For English teachers

The result of this study is expected to give an input for English teachers to give indirect corrective feedback in their teaching writing. Giving correction is almost becoming hard work to do. However, by conducting this research, researcher will be able to reveal whether or not indirect corrective feedback is essential in teaching writing.

b. For the students

This study is expected to be useful for the students to improve their writing accuracy skill by given indirect corrective feedback. It also can help the students to be more active in the teaching and learning process.

c. For the other researchers

Hopefully, the finding of current research can be used as an additional source for conducting better research in the same field in order to improve the quality of teaching writing as it will give different result when indirect corrective feedback is applied in different situation. Furthermore, this study will help other researchers who may plan having similar research viewed from any different psychological aspect beside grammatical sensitivity which probably have interaction with students' writing like motivation, anxiety, attitude, etc.

F. Operational Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation on the content of the study, the researcher defines the following terms:

1. Indirect corrective feedback is feedback given to the students' writing by underlining, circling, and giving symbols of errors as the indication that errors have been made.
2. Direct corrective feedback is feedback given to the students' writing by directly correcting any error made by the students. The feedback is given by crossing out the errors directly and then giving the correct form of the errors.
3. Writing accuracy is the ability of the students to write hortatory exposition text with minimized errors in grammar, language use, and

mechanic. The lesser the error, the more accurate the writing of the students.

4. Grammatical sensitivity is the ability to demonstrate a good understanding of syntactical patterns in a sentence, language use, and mechanics.

G. Organization of Study

To make a clear and systematic description of the study, the researcher organizes the whole description of the study systematically as follow:

The initial part contains cover, title page, approval page, validation page, statement of authenticity, motto, dedication, preface, table of contents, list of appendices, and abstract which contain a brief description of which is discussed in the thesis.

The main part consists of six chapters, each of its sub-chapter contains:

The first chapter contains the introduction. In the introductory chapter, first is described the background of the problem that underlie the emergence of the research focus to be studied in the form of questions that will help the researcher during the research process. Second, statement of the problem of the study contains a list of questions that will be sought through the completion of this study. Third, the objectives of the study is a direction that will be addressed in the study that will be followed by explaining what contribution, both theoretical and practical, will be given

after the completion of the study. Fourth, the definition of the term describes the variables in a study. Fifth, organization of the study reveals the chapters in the form of a short description .

The second chapter contains a review of the related literature or theory that describes the supporting information as a general overview of the background research that consists of theoretical explanation about teaching writing as well as direct and indirect corrective feedback in writing. In second chapter is also described completely about conceptual framework that the researcher used to direct the study. The last is the description about some previous studies that the researcher used as a guidance to conduct this study as well as the description of the gap of the foregoing study which the researcher tries to fulfill.

The third chapter contains the research method to be used in the research where the discussion include research design, variables of the study, population, sample, and technique to select the sample. Besides that, this chapter also contains the explanation of the technique to collect the data, technique to analyze the data and the description of the research statistical hypotheses.

The fourth chapter contains research findings which contains the description of the results of the pre test of both experimental and control groups, escription of posttest of oth experimental and control group, the description of the result of grammatical sensitivity test, the description of the fulfillment of statistical assumptions, and the last is data analysis.

The fifth chapter is a discussion of the results of the study conducted by researcher at the MA Ma'arif NU Kota Blitar. This chapter contains the results of the linkage between the theory and the result of the research that will be drawn into some conclusions.

The sixth chapter is a closing of the entire chapter which contains the research conclusions and suggestions. Conclusions contain the final description that related to the formulated research problems. Meanwhile, suggestions contain some suggested idea from the researchers which are addressed to the teacher and the future researchers who have the same concern with current study.

The final part includes a list of references which is a list of books that researcher used for reference to support the study, appendices that contains some documents related to the research. At the very end is about the researcher (author) information which consists of the researcher's biographical data which describes the complete biography of the researcher.