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Penulis : Nuriyatul Hamidah

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1. Bukti Submit Artikel

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1. Jurnal Bahasa Lingua Scientia, *Vol. 16, No. 1, Juni 2024*

SNAP TO READ

A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON TEACHERS' FEEDBACK IN EFL STUDENTS' WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Nuriyatul Hamidah
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung
nuriyahamida15@gmail.com

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Keywords: *EFL Writings, argumentative text, teacher feedback, sociocultural theory*

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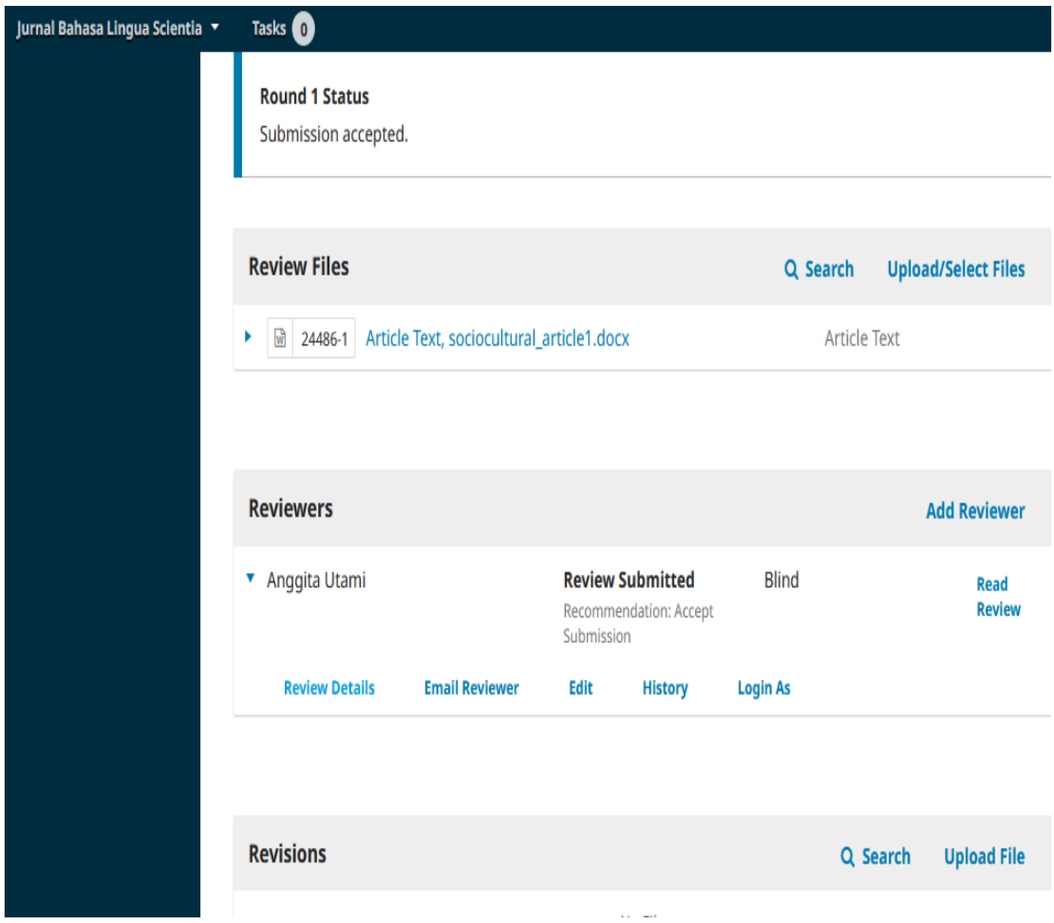

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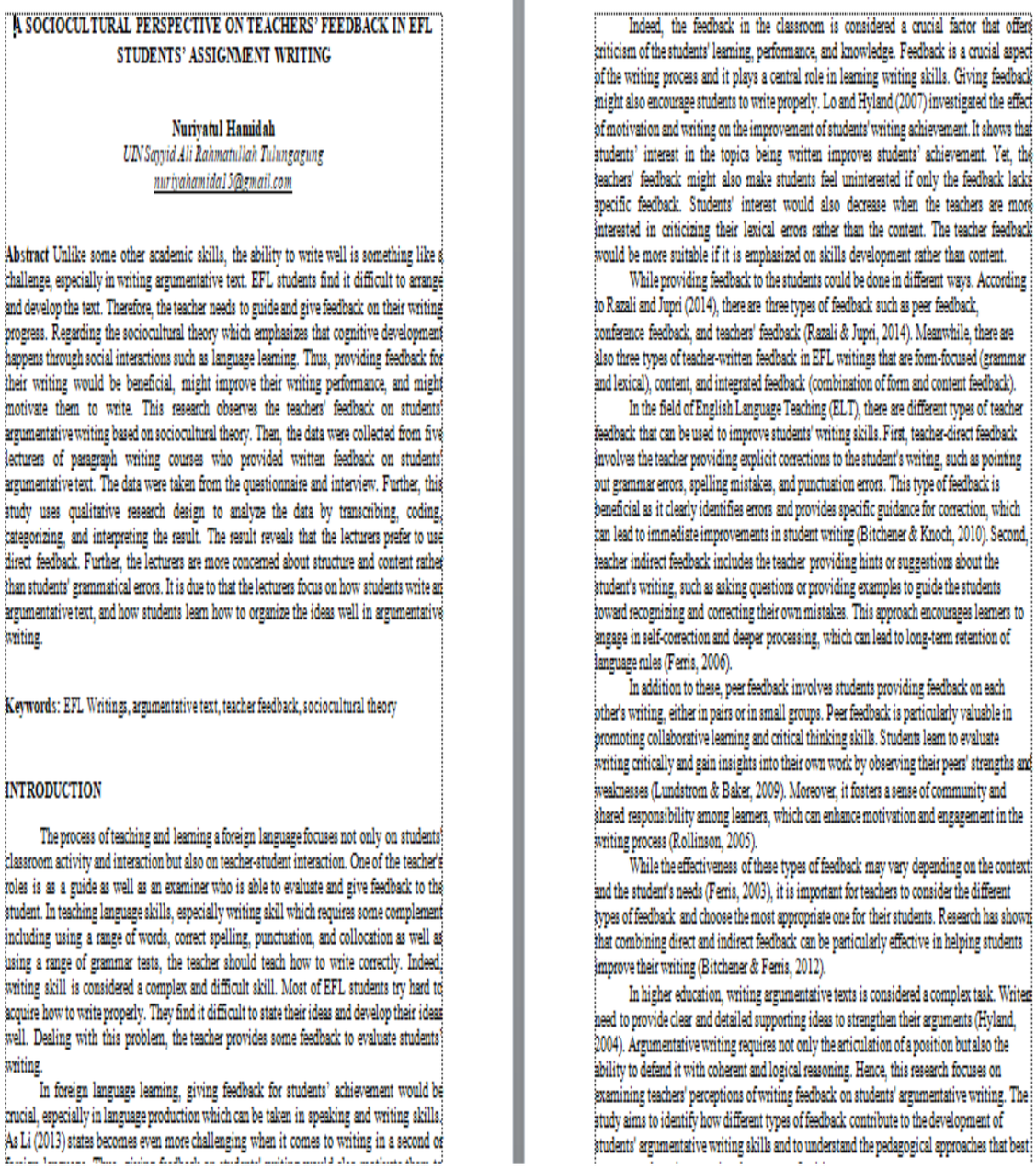

A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON TEACHERS' FEEDBACK IN EFL STUDENTS' ASSIGNMENT WRITING

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INTRODUCTION

The process of teaching and learning a foreign language focuses not only on students' classroom activity and interaction but also on teacher-student interaction. One of the teacher's roles is as a guide as well as an examiner who is able to evaluate and give feedback to the student. In teaching language skills, especially writing skill which requires some complement including using a range of words, correct spelling, punctuation, and collocation as well as using a range of grammar tests, the teacher should teach how to write correctly. Indeed, writing skill is considered a complex and difficult skill. Most of EFL students try hard to acquire how to write properly. They find it difficult to state their ideas and develop their ideas well. Dealing with this problem, the teacher provides some feedback to evaluate students' writing.

In foreign language learning, giving feedback for students' achievement would be crucial, especially in language production which can be taken in speaking and writing skills. As Li (2013) states becomes even more challenging when it comes to writing in a second or foreign language. Thus, giving feedback on students' writing would also motivate them to

Indeed, the feedback in the classroom is considered a crucial factor that offers criticism of the students' learning, performance, and knowledge. Feedback is a crucial aspect of the writing process and it plays a central role in learning writing skills. Giving feedback might also encourage students to write properly. Lo and Hyland (2007) investigated the effect of motivation and writing on the improvement of students' writing achievement. It shows that students' interest in the topics being written improves students' achievement. Yet, the teachers' feedback might also make students feel uninterested if only the feedback lacks specific feedback. Students' interest would also decrease when the teachers are more interested in criticizing their lexical errors rather than the content. The teacher feedback would be more suitable if it is emphasized on skills development rather than content.

While providing feedback to the students could be done in different ways. According to Razali and Jupri (2014), there are three types of feedback such as peer feedback, conference feedback, and teachers' feedback (Razali & Jupri, 2014). Meanwhile, there are also three types of teacher-written feedback in EFL writings that are form-focused (grammar and lexical), content, and integrated feedback (combination of form and content feedback).

In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), there are different types of teacher feedback that can be used to improve students' writing skills. First, teacher-direct feedback involves the teacher providing explicit corrections to the student's writing, such as pointing out grammar errors, spelling mistakes, and punctuation errors. This type of feedback is beneficial as it clearly identifies errors and provides specific guidance for correction, which can lead to immediate improvements in student writing (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). Second, teacher indirect feedback includes the teacher providing hints or suggestions about the student's writing, such as asking questions or providing examples to guide the students toward recognizing and correcting their own mistakes. This approach encourages learners to engage in self-correction and deeper processing, which can lead to long-term retention of language rules (Ferris, 2006).

In addition to these, peer feedback involves students providing feedback on each other's writing, either in pairs or in small groups. Peer feedback is particularly valuable in promoting collaborative learning and critical thinking skills. Students learn to evaluate writing critically and gain insights into their own work by observing their peers' strengths and weaknesses (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). Moreover, it fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility among learners, which can enhance motivation and engagement in the writing process (Rollinson, 2005).

While the effectiveness of these types of feedback may vary depending on the context and the student's needs (Ferris, 2003), it is important for teachers to consider the different types of feedback and choose the most appropriate one for their students. Research has shown that combining direct and indirect feedback can be particularly effective in helping students improve their writing (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

In higher education, writing argumentative texts is considered a complex task. Writers need to provide clear and detailed supporting ideas to strengthen their arguments (Hyland, 2004). Argumentative writing requires not only the articulation of a position but also the ability to defend it with coherent and logical reasoning. Hence, this research focuses on examining teachers' perceptions of writing feedback on students' argumentative writing. The study aims to identify how different types of feedback contribute to the development of students' argumentative writing skills and to understand the pedagogical approaches that best

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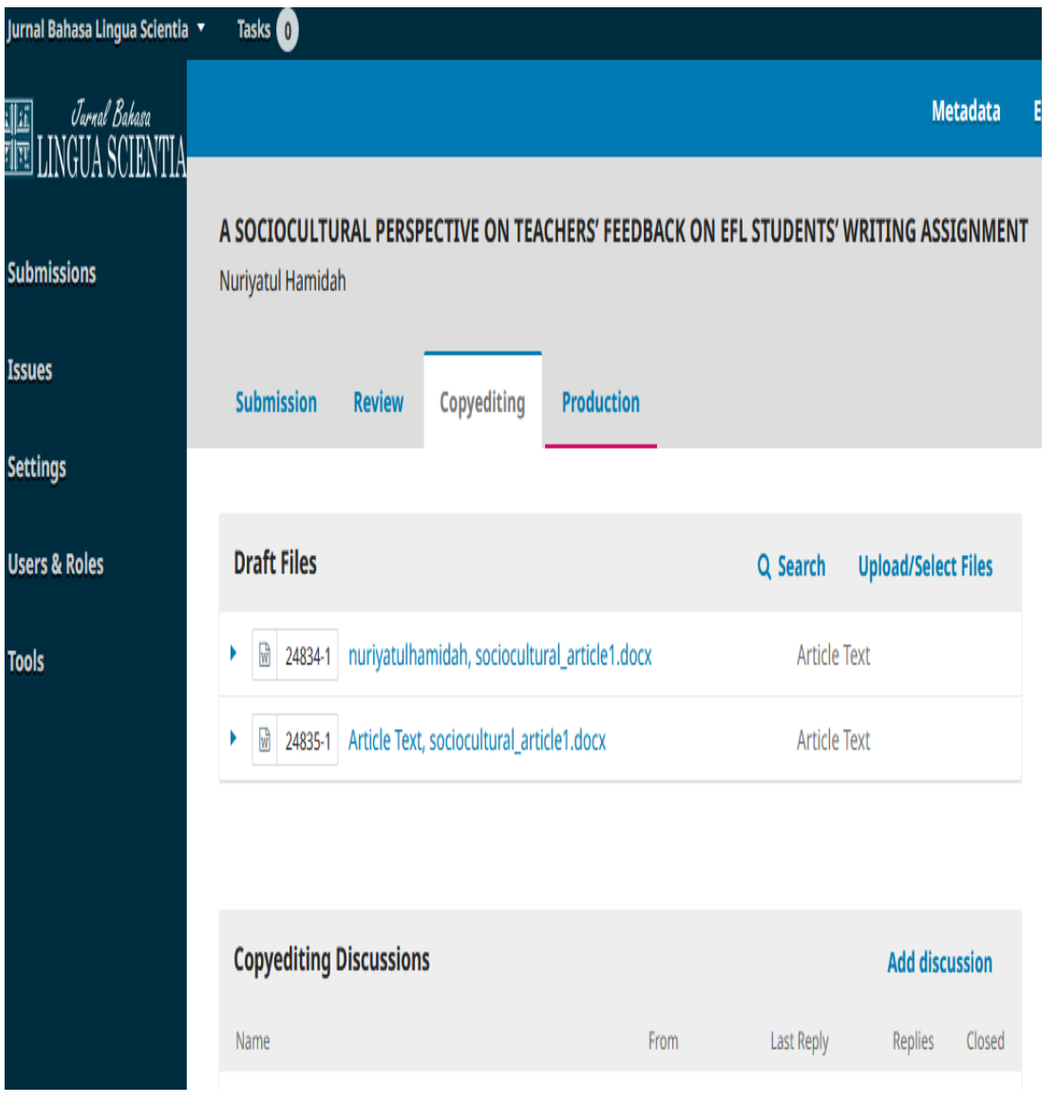

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Indeed, the feedback in the classroom is considered a crucial factor that offers criticism of the students' learning, performance, and knowledge. Feedback is a crucial aspect of the writing process and it plays a central role in learning writing skills. Giving feedback might also encourage students to write properly. Lo and Hyland (2007) investigated the effect of motivation and writing on the improvement of students' writing achievement. It shows that students' interest in the topics being written improves students' achievement. Yet, the teachers' feedback might also make students feel uninterested if only the feedback lacks specific feedback. Students' interest would also decrease when the teachers are more interested in criticizing their lexical

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Regarding the context of argumentative writing, teachers' feedback plays an essential role in helping students refine their arguments, enhance their critical thinking skills, and ultimately improve their overall writing proficiency. However, the way in which feedback is provided and received is influenced by various sociocultural factors, which can significantly impact its effectiveness and the learning outcomes of EFL students (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

This relates to Vygotsky's concept known as sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of social interactions in students' cognitive development. According to Vygotsky (1978), the more students interact with society, the more their cognitive abilities develop. One of the key concepts within this theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the difference between what learners can achieve independently and what they can achieve with guidance from more knowledgeable others, such as teachers or peers (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). For instance, in language learning, students who engage in communicative activities with more proficient peers or teachers can achieve a higher level of language proficiency

than they would on their own.

The ZPD is viewed as a critical area where students' potential can be maximized through the appropriate guidance and support provided by teachers and peers. This guidance enables students to overcome challenges and develop skills that are just beyond their current abilities (Lantolf, 2000). Therefore, feedback provided within the framework of sociocultural theory is closely linked to the application of the ZPD, as it not only addresses immediate learning needs but also fosters long-term cognitive development.

Some studies have been conducted to investigate the feedback on students' writing performance. For instance, Ferris (2006) examined the long-term effects of teacher feedback on ESL students' writing development and found that sustained and targeted feedback can significantly improve students' grammatical accuracy and overall writing proficiency. Similarly, Bitchener and Knoch (2010) investigated the effectiveness of written corrective feedback and concluded that direct feedback on specific linguistic errors led to noticeable improvements in students' writing over time. Another study by Lee (2017) explored the impact of different feedback types (e.g., direct vs. indirect) on students' revision processes and concluded that indirect feedback encourages deeper cognitive engagement, leading to more meaningful revisions.

This research focuses on the description of feedback in EFL writing class especially in writing argumentative essays. The topic was investigated based on sociocultural theory. Thus, this research attempts to investigate how the lecturers give feedback on their students' argumentative writings. This research would like to examine the application of sociocultural theory in giving feedback on students' writing performance to EFL teachers. It aims to investigate what type of classroom feedback is used by the teacher and how the teachers give feedback on their students' writing regarding Vygotsky's theory.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of Teacher-Written Feedback

In the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) writing instruction, teacher feedback is a crucial component in the development of students' writing skills. Scholars have identified two primary types of feedback: formative and summative. Formative feedback is intended to guide students in revising their work before it is graded, helping them to refine their ideas and improve their writing incrementally. On the other hand, summative feedback serves to evaluate the quality of the final product after the writing process is complete. Both types of feedback play essential roles in the instructional process, though their purposes and impacts on students may differ significantly (Park, 2006).

The focus of teacher feedback, whether formative or summative, can vary. It may be form-focused, which emphasizes grammar correction, content-based, which addresses the quality and organization of ideas, or integrative, which combines both form and content. According to Ferris (2003), in a process-oriented approach to writing, teachers should initially focus on content in early drafts and then shift to form-focused feedback in the final stages of writing. This approach allows students to first concentrate on developing their ideas and arguments before refining the language and grammar. Research has shown that this method can be effective in helping students improve both the content and form of their writing (Ferris, 2003).

Studies have explored students' preferences for different types of feedback. For instance, Ferris (2004) found that many students appreciate form-focused feedback, especially when it helps them correct grammatical errors. However, other research indicates that content-based feedback can be more motivating for students, as it engages them more deeply with the subject matter and encourages critical thinking. Alamis (2010), for example, found that students who received content-focused feedback demonstrated higher motivation and a greater willingness to revise their work. Similarly, Park (2006) and Ravichandran (2002) reported that students preferred feedback

that addressed the substance of their writing over purely grammatical corrections.

Despite these findings, the effectiveness of feedback may depend on various factors, including the student's proficiency level, the nature of the writing task, and the context in which the feedback is provided. For example, lower-proficiency students might benefit more from form-focused feedback that helps them develop basic writing skills, while more advanced students may prefer feedback that challenges their ideas and arguments (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). Therefore, teachers should consider these factors when deciding on the type and focus of feedback to provide, aiming to meet the specific needs of their students.

In conclusion, teacher-written feedback is a multifaceted tool that can significantly impact students' writing development. Whether formative or summative, feedback can be tailored to focus on form, content, or both, depending on the instructional goals and the student's needs. While research highlights varying student preferences for different types of feedback, the most effective approach may be one that is responsive to individual student contexts. By carefully considering the nature and focus of feedback, teachers can better support their students in becoming more proficient and confident writers.

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory, proposed by Lev Vygotsky, posits that individual learning development is deeply interconnected with social and cultural processes. Vygotsky emphasized that learning is inherently a social process, where interaction within society plays a crucial role in cognitive development. According to this theory, social interactions are not just a context for development, but a driving force that shapes an individual's conceptual thinking and intellectual growth (Vygotsky, 1978). This perspective underscores the importance of the social environment in facilitating learning and highlights how collaborative activities can enhance cognitive processes (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

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There are two key principles within sociocultural theory. The first principle is that cognitive development is mediated by cultural tools and social interactions. This means that learning is not merely a result of individual efforts but is significantly influenced by the cultural context and the interactions an individual has with others in their society (Lantolf, 2000). The tools and symbols provided by culture, such as language, play a crucial role in shaping the ways individuals think and understand the world around them. Through social interactions, learners internalize these cultural tools, which in turn mediate their cognitive development (Wertsch, 1991).

One of the main concepts of sociocultural theory is the children's cognitive development, which Vygotsky describes as occurring on two levels. The first level is the actual developmental level, where a child can perform tasks independently. The second level, known as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), represents the potential for cognitive development that can be achieved with the guidance and support of a more knowledgeable other, such as a teacher or a peer (Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of language learning, the ZPD is a crucial concept because it illustrates how learners can achieve higher levels of understanding and skill with appropriate scaffolding from others. It highlights the importance of instructional strategies that align with the learner's ZPD to maximize learning potential (Shabani, Khatib, & Ebadi, 2010).

In language learning, the ZPD serves as a framework for understanding how learners can progress from their current level of competence to a higher level through the assistance of a more knowledgeable individual. This concept is central to instructional practices that emphasize collaboration and dialogue, as these interactions provide the necessary support for learners to move beyond their current capabilities (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2015). Teachers can effectively utilize the ZPD by offering targeted feedback and support that challenges students just beyond their current abilities, thereby promoting cognitive growth and development (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

Argumentative writing

Argumentative writing involves complex cognitive processes that require students to construct logical arguments, anticipate counterarguments, and present evidence persuasively. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of critical thinking skills in the development of effective argumentative writing. For instance, Stapleton and Wu (2015) emphasize that critical thinking is integral to constructing coherent arguments and that students' ability to critically evaluate information significantly impacts the quality of their argumentative essays. Similarly, Ferretti and Fan (2021) discuss how students must engage in higher-order thinking to organize their arguments logically and coherently, indicating that cognitive development is crucial for mastering argumentative writing.

Feedback plays a crucial role in the development of students' argumentative writing skills. Recent studies have examined the effectiveness of different types of feedback, including teacher feedback, peer feedback, and automated feedback systems. A meta-analysis by Biber et al. (2017) indicates that formative feedback, which provides students with specific suggestions for improvement, is particularly effective in enhancing the quality of argumentative essays. Moreover, Zheng et al. (2019) found that peer feedback can be beneficial for EFL students, as it allows them to receive diverse perspectives on their writing and encourages collaborative learning. However, the effectiveness of feedback also depends on students' ability to interpret and apply the feedback, as noted by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2016).

Sociocultural Theory to Writing Feedback

Some research has been investigated in the field of writing skills. It is examined as a contextual process involving the writer's cognitive process. The sociocultural theory is comprised of social and cultural components.

The teachers give feedback on their students' writing to improve their skills. They only focus on correcting grammar and language used not the writing organization such as organization, paragraphing, cohesion, relevance,

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and adequacy. Thus, Rahimi & Naroozisiam (2013) argued that interaction and negotiation among teachers, materials, tasks, and sociocultural mediating strategies make students acquire knowledge.

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), feedback plays a critical role in enhancing students' writing skills. There are three primary types of feedback based on the party who delivers it: peer feedback, conference feedback, and teacher feedback. Peer feedback involves students reviewing and providing constructive criticism of each other's work. This type of feedback encourages collaboration and allows students to engage in reflective thinking about their own and their peers' writing (Liu & Hansen, 2002). Conference feedback is typically delivered during one-on-one meetings between the teacher and the student, where the teacher offers personalized guidance and support based on the student's specific needs (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Teacher feedback, on the other hand, is the most traditional form, where the instructor provides written comments or corrections directly on the student's work. Teacher feedback is often seen as authoritative and is valued for its potential to address both global (content and organization) and local (grammar and mechanics) aspects of writing (Ferris, 2003).

Corrective feedback, which is intended to address errors in students' writing, can be categorized based on its form into direct and indirect feedback. Direct feedback occurs when the teacher explicitly corrects the errors in the student's text, providing the correct form or structure. This type of feedback is particularly beneficial for lower-level learners who may struggle to identify and correct their mistakes independently (Kitchener, 2008). Indirect feedback, in contrast, involves the teacher indicating that an error has been made without providing the correct form, often using symbols or codes to prompt the student to self-correct. Research suggests that indirect feedback can promote deeper cognitive processing and improve long-term retention of language forms, as it encourages students to actively engage with the feedback and solve problems independently (Ellis, 2009).

Both direct and indirect feedback have their advantages and limitations,

and their effectiveness may vary depending on the context and the learners' proficiency levels. While direct feedback provides immediate correction and is often preferred by learners for its clarity, it may not always lead to long-term learning if students rely solely on the teacher's corrections. On the other hand, indirect feedback fosters greater learner autonomy and critical thinking but may be less effective if students are unable to identify and correct their errors without further guidance (Ferris & Roberts, 2001). Therefore, a balanced approach that combines both direct and indirect feedback, tailored to the specific needs of the students, is often recommended in the literature (Hyland, 2003).

In conclusion, understanding the different types of feedback and how they can be applied in various teaching contexts is essential for effective English language instruction. By leveraging peer feedback, conference feedback, and teacher feedback, and by appropriately using direct and indirect corrective feedback, teachers can better support their students in developing strong writing skills and becoming more autonomous learners.

RESEARCH METHOD

This present study uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative research focuses on understanding people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, and behaviors (Creswell, 2007). This research aims to collect and examine the lived experience of the participants involved in this study. It is investigated to find out people's opinions or feelings about a particular issue. It examined lecturers' experiences in giving feedback on students' argumentative writing tasks and their opinions about the feedback they have given. Further, the data are taken from the lecturers of the writing class as the research subject. The subjects of this study were 5 English writing lecturers. To get the data, the researcher used semi-structured interviews that involved questions on how they give feedback on students' writing performance, what to focus on giving the feedback to students' writing, how important is their feedback for students' writing performance and what are the types of feedback that they used. From

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the result of the interview, the data was then analyzed and interpreted to identify how they give feedback on their students' argumentative writing. It also used students' writings with the teacher's comments on them to get the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Focus on giving feedback on students' writings

The result shows different findings. First, lecturers 02 and 05 prefer to focus on grammar. This is because the students find it difficult to apply correct grammar in their writing, especially in argumentative writing. They need to state the idea clearly to ensure that the claim or the idea is correct. Besides, the teachers said that their students find it difficult to master. Secondly is writing text structure or arrangement. According to Harmer (2015), focusing on grammar helps students produce clearer and more coherent arguments, as grammatical errors can obscure meaning (Harmer, J. (2015).

Teacher 03 chooses to focus on the writing structure because writing in English needs to be well organized. Writing argumentative text would be easily understood if the texts are structurally well written. The claim as well as the argument must be arranged clearly. Then, it is about content. This aligns with Hyland's (2019) assertion that coherent text organization is crucial for effective argumentation. Structured argumentative texts are more accessible to readers, reinforcing the need for a clear arrangement of claims and evidence.

While Lecturer 04 chooses to focus on the content because the students need to know what topic they should write in argumentative text. Such as, the students should know how to state the idea clearly, and how to strengthen the claim in argumentative text. This approach is supported by Nunan (2015), who highlights that a well-developed argument depends on clear, relevant content.

Further, it revealed that grammar and the content of the text became another focus. Lecturer 01 choose to focus on both grammar and content. She

believes those things are very important because grammar and content are important to make the text well organized. Thus, it can be easily understood.

Lastly, it includes all aspects (grammar, content, and structure). Teacher 05 chooses to focus on all aspects. They argued that to be proficient in writing, the students need to be able to master all aspects of writing such as text organization, linguistic features such as vocabulary used, the text structure. This comprehensive method supports the argument made by Ferris (2014) that proficiency in writing requires attention to multiple elements, including linguistic features and text organization

Types of Feedback

Lecturers 02, 04, and 05 choose indirect feedback because it makes students know their mistakes and how they should correct the error. At the same time, it can train them to be more self-directed learners based on the corrections given by the lecturers. It is assumed that they can solve the same problems in the future. This approach is supported by studies indicating that indirect feedback can enhance students' self-efficacy and autonomy (Lee, I. (2017).

While Lectures 01 and L03 choose direct feedback because it will help students to know the mistakes and correct them directly. Therefore, it is believed that often do not catch the hints they receive to correct the errors. It can be more effective and meaningful. This method aligns with the research by Bitchener and Knoch (2009), who argue that direct feedback can be more effective for students who struggle with error detection.

Considering Students' ZPD in Giving Feedback

Regarding sociocultural theory, the zone of proximal development plays an important role in giving feedback. Most of the participants were concerned with students' zone of proximal development while giving the feedback. They believed that students can improve their writing better when they have seen the feedback. In the future, they can use the feedback to solve the same problem they have while writing argumentative text. Moreover, by identifying students' written progress, the teachers can make strategies to

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increase the cognitive development of the students' writing skills.

Feedback aligned with the ZPD allows students to tackle tasks that are just beyond their current capabilities with guidance. According to Cummings (2020), providing feedback within the ZPD helps students build on their existing skills and promotes their cognitive growth. By targeting feedback to the ZPD, teachers can enhance students' ability to apply new knowledge and skills independently in future writing tasks.

Effective feedback within the ZPD also supports students in recognizing their progress and understanding their areas of improvement. Yang and Hu (2018) highlight that feedback that considers students' developmental stages can lead to better outcomes in writing by making the feedback process more relevant and actionable.

Furthermore, feedback within the ZPD encourages a reflective learning process. According to Zeng and Wang (2019), when feedback is tailored to students' developmental needs, it fosters a deeper understanding of writing concepts and strategies, leading to more substantial improvements in their writing skills.

How Teachers Give Feedback

Nowadays, giving feedback on the student's writing would be such as easy when it deals with the way how the teacher or the lecturers give the feedback. The pandemic era may have an influence on it. After the pandemic, some lecturers use some platforms for their teaching including providing feedback. In giving feedback, tools like Google Classroom and WhatsApp have become popular for submitting and reviewing assignments, allowing lecturers to use features like track changes for more efficient feedback. Showing that digital platforms can enhance the feedback process by making it more accessible and engaging for students (Cunningham, 2021). These platforms enable students to receive feedback quickly and in a format that is easy to revise, contributing to improved writing outcomes. The lecturers give comments and mark some errors using the features in the document file like track changes. Then, the students are required to revise their writing

based on the feedback given.

Despite the shift towards digital feedback, some lecturers still prefer traditional face-to-face methods. Lecturers 02 and 03, for example, used to give feedback directly in the classroom, where they could engage directly with students. This approach allows for immediate clarification of feedback, fostering interactive discussions that can deepen students' understanding of their writing (Ellis, 2020). Face-to-face feedback also offers a more personalized touch, which some students may find more motivating and effective for their learning.

In short, the choice between digital and face-to-face feedback methods often depends on the specific needs of students and the teaching context. While digital tools provide efficiency and accessibility, face-to-face interactions offer richer, more dynamic feedback experiences. Combining these approaches can be beneficial, allowing lecturers to capitalize on the strengths of both methods (Han & Hyland, 2019). This blended approach can enhance the overall effectiveness of feedback by ensuring that students receive both detailed written comments and the opportunity for real-time discussion.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examines the teachers' experiences in giving feedback on students' writing performance that is argumentative text. While giving feedback, most of the participants chose corrective feedback which focuses more on the grammar. It is believed that the basic thing students need to master in writing is how can they construct the idea clearly in the written form. Thus, they need to be able to apply correct grammar to their writing. It also reflects the curriculum in which the students have to write English text especially argumentative. Besides, all the aspects of the writing must be considered including the structure or written text organization, grammatical aspect, and content of the writing texts. Most participating teachers tend to provide direct feedback. They argued that they could give the feedback

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directly to the students. Others, the students can also discuss the errors with the teacher. In this way, it can confirm students' understanding regarding the correction given. Thus, the role of teacher-student discussion can enhance their competence in construction knowledge in line to the feedback from the lecturers. In short, they do the process of joint construction of new knowledge. This is strongly connected to the sociocultural approach which believes that learning is obtained from social interactions. Regarding the sociocultural perspective, lecturers should be aware of students' interests, needs, and abilities. Some of the participants have considered students' zone of proximal development in giving their feedback. They argued that students could independently correct their own errors in the future by referring to the feedback given. However, it is also considered that the students may have different types of written errors. Because it may depend on their cognitive level as well as experiences, and social interactions. Regarding the research finding, it is suggested that further research is to investigate or observe another language skill.

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SNAP TO READ

A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON TEACHERS' FEEDBACK IN EFL STUDENTS' WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Nuriyatul Hamidah
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung
nuriyahamida15@gmail.com

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Abstract:
Unlike some other academic skills, the ability to write well is something like a challenge, especially in writing argumentative text. EFL students find it difficult to arrange and develop the text. Therefore, the teacher needs to guide and give feedback on their writing progress. Regarding the sociocultural theory which emphasizes that cognitive development happens through social interactions such as language learning. Thus, providing feedback for their writing would be beneficial, might improve their writing performance, and might motivate them to write. This research observes the teachers' feedback on students' argumentative writing based on sociocultural theory. Then, the data were collected from five lecturers of paragraph writing courses who provided written feedback on students' argumentative text. The data were taken from the questionnaire and interview. Further, this study uses qualitative research design to analyze the data by transcribing, coding, categorizing, and interpreting the result. The result reveals that the lecturers prefer to use direct feedback. Further, the lecturers are more concerned about structure and content rather than students' grammatical errors. It is due to that the lecturers focus on how students write an argumentative text, and how students learn how to organize the ideas well in argumentative writing.

Keywords: *EFL Writings, argumentative text, teacher feedback, sociocultural theory*

INTRODUCTION

The process of teaching and learning a foreign language focuses not only on students' classroom activity and interaction but also on teacher-student interaction. One of the teacher's roles is as a guide as well as an examiner who is able to evaluate and give feedback to the student. In teaching language skills, especially writing skill which requires some complement including using a range of words, correct spelling, punctuation, and collocation as well as using a range of grammar tests, the teacher should teach how to write correctly. Indeed, writing skill is considered a complex and difficult skill. Most of EFL students try hard to acquire how to write properly. They find it difficult to state their ideas and develop their ideas well. Dealing with this problem, the teacher provides some feedback to evaluate students' writing.

In foreign language learning, giving feedback for students' achievement would be crucial, especially in language production which can be taken in speaking and writing skills. As Li (2013) states becomes even more challenging when it comes to writing in a second or foreign language. Thus, giving feedback on students' writing would also motivate them to write. Giving a chance for them to revise and develop their writing would help them to develop and expand their idea. Thus, in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, the importance of providing effective feedback on students' writing would be a crucial factor in their language development.

Indeed, the feedback in the classroom is considered a crucial factor that offers criticism of the students' learning, performance, and knowledge. Feedback is a crucial aspect of the writing process and it plays a central role in learning writing skills. Giving feedback might also encourage students to write properly. Lo and Hyland (2007) investigated the effect of motivation and writing on the improvement of students' writing achievement. It shows that students' interest in the topics being written improves students' achievement. Yet, the teachers' feedback might also make students feel uninterested if only the feedback lacks specific feedback. Students' interest would also decrease when the teachers are more interested in criticizing their lexical

errors rather than the content. The teacher feedback would be more suitable if it is emphasized on skills development rather than content.

While providing feedback to the students could be done in different ways. According to Razali and Jupri (2014), there are three types of feedback such as peer feedback, conference feedback, and teachers' feedback (Razali & Jupri, 2014). Meanwhile, there are also three types of teacher-written feedback in EFL writings that are form-focused (grammar and lexical), content, and integrated feedback (combination of form and content feedback).

In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), there are different types of teacher feedback that can be used to improve students' writing skills. First, teacher-direct feedback involves the teacher providing explicit corrections to the student's writing, such as pointing out grammar errors, spelling mistakes, and punctuation errors. This type of feedback is beneficial as it clearly identifies errors and provides specific guidance for correction, which can lead to immediate improvements in student writing (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). Second, teacher indirect feedback includes the teacher providing hints or suggestions about the student's writing, such as asking questions or providing examples to guide the students toward recognizing and correcting their own mistakes. This approach encourages learners to engage in self-correction and deeper processing, which can lead to long-term retention of language rules (Ferris, 2006).

In addition to these, peer feedback involves students providing feedback on each other's writing, either in pairs or in small groups. Peer feedback is particularly valuable in promoting collaborative learning and critical thinking skills. Students learn to evaluate writing critically and gain insights into their own work by observing their peers' strengths and weaknesses (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). Moreover, it fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility among learners, which can enhance motivation and engagement in the writing process (Rollinson, 2005).

While the effectiveness of these types of feedback may vary depending on the context and the student's needs (Ferris, 2003), it is important for

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teachers to consider the different types of feedback and choose the most appropriate one for their students. Research has shown that combining direct and indirect feedback can be particularly effective in helping students improve their writing (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

In higher education, writing argumentative texts is considered a complex task. Writers need to provide clear and detailed supporting ideas to strengthen their arguments (Hyland, 2004). Argumentative writing requires not only the articulation of a position but also the ability to defend it with coherent and logical reasoning. Hence, this research focuses on examining teachers' perceptions of writing feedback on students' argumentative writing. The study aims to identify how different types of feedback contribute to the development of students' argumentative writing skills and to understand the pedagogical approaches that best support students in mastering these types of writing.

Regarding the context of argumentative writing, teachers' feedback plays an essential role in helping students refine their arguments, enhance their critical thinking skills, and ultimately improve their overall writing proficiency. However, the way in which feedback is provided and received is influenced by various sociocultural factors, which can significantly impact its effectiveness and the learning outcomes of EFL students (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

This relates to Vygotsky's concept known as sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of social interactions in students' cognitive development. According to Vygotsky (1978), the more students interact with society, the more their cognitive abilities develop. One of the key concepts within this theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the difference between what learners can achieve independently and what they can achieve with guidance from more knowledgeable others, such as teachers or peers (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). For instance, in language learning, students who engage in communicative activities with more proficient peers or teachers can achieve a higher level of language proficiency

than they would on their own.

The ZPD is viewed as a critical area where students' potential can be maximized through the appropriate guidance and support provided by teachers and peers. This guidance enables students to overcome challenges and develop skills that are just beyond their current abilities (Lantolf, 2000). Therefore, feedback provided within the framework of sociocultural theory is closely linked to the application of the ZPD, as it not only addresses immediate learning needs but also fosters long-term cognitive development.

Some studies have been conducted to investigate the feedback on students' writing performance. For instance, Ferris (2006) examined the long-term effects of teacher feedback on ESL students' writing development and found that sustained and targeted feedback can significantly improve students' grammatical accuracy and overall writing proficiency. Similarly, Bitchener and Knoch (2010) investigated the effectiveness of written corrective feedback and concluded that direct feedback on specific linguistic errors led to noticeable improvements in students' writing over time. Another study by Lee (2017) explored the impact of different feedback types (e.g., direct vs. indirect) on students' revision processes and concluded that indirect feedback encourages deeper cognitive engagement, leading to more meaningful revisions.

This research focuses on the description of feedback in EFL writing class especially in writing argumentative essays. The topic was investigated based on sociocultural theory. Thus, this research attempts to investigate how the lecturers give feedback on their students' argumentative writings. This research would like to examine the application of sociocultural theory in giving feedback on students' writing performance to EFL teachers. It aims to investigate what type of classroom feedback is used by the teacher and how the teachers give feedback on their students' writing regarding Vygotsky's theory.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of Teacher-Written Feedback

In the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) writing instruction, teacher feedback is a crucial component in the development of students' writing skills. Scholars have identified two primary types of feedback: formative and summative. Formative feedback is intended to guide students in revising their work before it is graded, helping them to refine their ideas and improve their writing incrementally. On the other hand, summative feedback serves to evaluate the quality of the final product after the writing process is complete. Both types of feedback play essential roles in the instructional process, though their purposes and impacts on students may differ significantly (Park, 2006).

The focus of teacher feedback, whether formative or summative, can vary. It may be form-focused, which emphasizes grammar correction, content-based, which addresses the quality and organization of ideas, or integrative, which combines both form and content. According to Ferris (2003), in a process-oriented approach to writing, teachers should initially focus on content in early drafts and then shift to form-focused feedback in the final stages of writing. This approach allows students to first concentrate on developing their ideas and arguments before refining the language and grammar. Research has shown that this method can be effective in helping students improve both the content and form of their writing (Ferris, 2003).

Studies have explored students' preferences for different types of feedback. For instance, Ferris (2004) found that many students appreciate form-focused feedback, especially when it helps them correct grammatical errors. However, other research indicates that content-based feedback can be more motivating for students, as it engages them more deeply with the subject matter and encourages critical thinking. Alamis (2010), for example, found that students who received content-focused feedback demonstrated higher motivation and a greater willingness to revise their work. Similarly, Park (2006) and Ravichandran (2002) reported that students preferred feedback

that addressed the substance of their writing over purely grammatical corrections.

Despite these findings, the effectiveness of feedback may depend on various factors, including the student's proficiency level, the nature of the writing task, and the context in which the feedback is provided. For example, lower-proficiency students might benefit more from form-focused feedback that helps them develop basic writing skills, while more advanced students may prefer feedback that challenges their ideas and arguments (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). Therefore, teachers should consider these factors when deciding on the type and focus of feedback to provide, aiming to meet the specific needs of their students.

In conclusion, teacher-written feedback is a multifaceted tool that can significantly impact students' writing development. Whether formative or summative, feedback can be tailored to focus on form, content, or both, depending on the instructional goals and the student's needs. While research highlights varying student preferences for different types of feedback, the most effective approach may be one that is responsive to individual student contexts. By carefully considering the nature and focus of feedback, teachers can better support their students in becoming more proficient and confident writers.

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory, proposed by Lev Vygotsky, posits that individual learning development is deeply interconnected with social and cultural processes. Vygotsky emphasized that learning is inherently a social process, where interaction within society plays a crucial role in cognitive development. According to this theory, social interactions are not just a context for development, but a driving force that shapes an individual's conceptual thinking and intellectual growth (Vygotsky, 1978). This perspective underscores the importance of the social environment in facilitating learning and highlights how collaborative activities can enhance cognitive processes (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

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There are two key principles within sociocultural theory. The first principle is that cognitive development is mediated by cultural tools and social interactions. This means that learning is not merely a result of individual efforts but is significantly influenced by the cultural context and the interactions an individual has with others in their society (Lantolf, 2000). The tools and symbols provided by culture, such as language, play a crucial role in shaping the ways individuals think and understand the world around them. Through social interactions, learners internalize these cultural tools, which in turn mediate their cognitive development (Wertsch, 1991).

One of the main concepts of sociocultural theory is the children's cognitive development, which Vygotsky describes as occurring on two levels. The first level is the actual developmental level, where a child can perform tasks independently. The second level, known as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), represents the potential for cognitive development that can be achieved with the guidance and support of a more knowledgeable other, such as a teacher or a peer (Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of language learning, the ZPD is a crucial concept because it illustrates how learners can achieve higher levels of understanding and skill with appropriate scaffolding from others. It highlights the importance of instructional strategies that align with the learner's ZPD to maximize learning potential (Shabani, Khatib, & Ebadi, 2010).

In language learning, the ZPD serves as a framework for understanding how learners can progress from their current level of competence to a higher level through the assistance of a more knowledgeable individual. This concept is central to instructional practices that emphasize collaboration and dialogue, as these interactions provide the necessary support for learners to move beyond their current capabilities (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2015). Teachers can effectively utilize the ZPD by offering targeted feedback and support that challenges students just beyond their current abilities, thereby promoting cognitive growth and development (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

Argumentative writing

Argumentative writing involves complex cognitive processes that require students to construct logical arguments, anticipate counterarguments, and present evidence persuasively. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of critical thinking skills in the development of effective argumentative writing. For instance, Stapleton and Wu (2015) emphasize that critical thinking is integral to constructing coherent arguments and that students' ability to critically evaluate information significantly impacts the quality of their argumentative essays. Similarly, Ferretti and Fan (2021) discuss how students must engage in higher-order thinking to organize their arguments logically and coherently, indicating that cognitive development is crucial for mastering argumentative writing.

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The teachers give feedback on their students' writing to improve their skills. They only focus on correcting grammar and language used not the writing organization such as organization, paragraphing, cohesion, relevance,

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and adequacy. Thus, Rahimi & Naroozisiam (2013) argued that interaction and negotiation among teachers, materials, tasks, and sociocultural mediating strategies make students acquire knowledge.

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), feedback plays a critical role in enhancing students' writing skills. There are three primary types of feedback based on the party who delivers it: peer feedback, conference feedback, and teacher feedback. Peer feedback involves students reviewing and providing constructive criticism of each other's work. This type of feedback encourages collaboration and allows students to engage in reflective thinking about their own and their peers' writing (Liu & Hansen, 2002). Conference feedback is typically delivered during one-on-one meetings between the teacher and the student, where the teacher offers personalized guidance and support based on the student's specific needs (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Teacher feedback, on the other hand, is the most traditional form, where the instructor provides written comments or corrections directly on the student's work. Teacher feedback is often seen as authoritative and is valued for its potential to address both global (content and organization) and local (grammar and mechanics) aspects of writing (Ferris, 2003).

Corrective feedback, which is intended to address errors in students' writing, can be categorized based on its form into direct and indirect feedback. Direct feedback occurs when the teacher explicitly corrects the errors in the student's text, providing the correct form or structure. This type of feedback is particularly beneficial for lower-level learners who may struggle to identify and correct their mistakes independently (Kitchener, 2008). Indirect feedback, in contrast, involves the teacher indicating that an error has been made without providing the correct form, often using symbols or codes to prompt the student to self-correct. Research suggests that indirect feedback can promote deeper cognitive processing and improve long-term retention of language forms, as it encourages students to actively engage with the feedback and solve problems independently (Ellis, 2009).

Both direct and indirect feedback have their advantages and limitations,

and their effectiveness may vary depending on the context and the learners' proficiency levels. While direct feedback provides immediate correction and is often preferred by learners for its clarity, it may not always lead to long-term learning if students rely solely on the teacher's corrections. On the other hand, indirect feedback fosters greater learner autonomy and critical thinking but may be less effective if students are unable to identify and correct their errors without further guidance (Ferris & Roberts, 2001). Therefore, a balanced approach that combines both direct and indirect feedback, tailored to the specific needs of the students, is often recommended in the literature (Hyland, 2003).

In conclusion, understanding the different types of feedback and how they can be applied in various teaching contexts is essential for effective English language instruction. By leveraging peer feedback, conference feedback, and teacher feedback, and by appropriately using direct and indirect corrective feedback, teachers can better support their students in developing strong writing skills and becoming more autonomous learners.

RESEARCH METHOD

This present study uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative research focuses on understanding people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, and behaviors (Creswell, 2007). This research aims to collect and examine the lived experience of the participants involved in this study. It is investigated to find out people's opinions or feelings about a particular issue. It examined lecturers' experiences in giving feedback on students' argumentative writing tasks and their opinions about the feedback they have given. Further, the data are taken from the lecturers of the writing class as the research subject. The subjects of this study were 5 English writing lecturers. To get the data, the researcher used semi-structured interviews that involved questions on how they give feedback on students' writing performance, what to focus on giving the feedback to students' writing, how important is their feedback for students' writing performance and what are the types of feedback that they used. From

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the result of the interview, the data was then analyzed and interpreted to identify how they give feedback on their students' argumentative writing. It also used students' writings with the teacher's comments on them to get the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Focus on giving feedback on students' writings

The result shows different findings. First, lecturers 02 and 05 prefer to focus on grammar. This is because the students find it difficult to apply correct grammar in their writing, especially in argumentative writing. They need to state the idea clearly to ensure that the claim or the idea is correct. Besides, the teachers said that their students find it difficult to master. Secondly is writing text structure or arrangement. According to Harmer (2015), focusing on grammar helps students produce clearer and more coherent arguments, as grammatical errors can obscure meaning (Harmer, J. (2015).

Teacher 03 chooses to focus on the writing structure because writing in English needs to be well organized. Writing argumentative text would be easily understood if the texts are structurally well written. The claim as well as the argument must be arranged clearly. Then, it is about content. This aligns with Hyland's (2019) assertion that coherent text organization is crucial for effective argumentation. Structured argumentative texts are more accessible to readers, reinforcing the need for a clear arrangement of claims and evidence.

While Lecturer 04 chooses to focus on the content because the students need to know what topic they should write in argumentative text. Such as, the students should know how to state the idea clearly, and how to strengthen the claim in argumentative text. This approach is supported by Nunan (2015), who highlights that a well-developed argument depends on clear, relevant content.

Further, it revealed that grammar and the content of the text became another focus. Lecturer 01 choose to focus on both grammar and content. She

believes those things are very important because grammar and content are important to make the text well organized. Thus, it can be easily understood.

Lastly, it includes all aspects (grammar, content, and structure). Teacher 05 chooses to focus on all aspects. They argued that to be proficient in writing, the students need to be able to master all aspects of writing such as text organization, linguistic features such as vocabulary used, the text structure. This comprehensive method supports the argument made by Ferris (2014) that proficiency in writing requires attention to multiple elements, including linguistic features and text organization

Types of Feedback

Lecturers 02, 04, and 05 choose indirect feedback because it makes students know their mistakes and how they should correct the error. At the same time, it can train them to be more self-directed learners based on the corrections given by the lecturers. It is assumed that they can solve the same problems in the future. This approach is supported by studies indicating that indirect feedback can enhance students' self-efficacy and autonomy (Lee, I. (2017).

While Lectures 01 and L03 choose direct feedback because it will help students to know the mistakes and correct them directly. Therefore, it is believed that often do not catch the hints they receive to correct the errors. It can be more effective and meaningful. This method aligns with the research by Bitchener and Knoch (2009), who argue that direct feedback can be more effective for students who struggle with error detection.

Considering Students' ZPD in Giving Feedback

Regarding sociocultural theory, the zone of proximal development plays an important role in giving feedback. Most of the participants were concerned with students' zone of proximal development while giving the feedback. They believed that students can improve their writing better when they have seen the feedback. In the future, they can use the feedback to solve the same problem they have while writing argumentative text. Moreover, by identifying students' written progress, the teachers can make strategies to

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increase the cognitive development of the students' writing skills.

Feedback aligned with the ZPD allows students to tackle tasks that are just beyond their current capabilities with guidance. According to Cummings (2020), providing feedback within the ZPD helps students build on their existing skills and promotes their cognitive growth. By targeting feedback to the ZPD, teachers can enhance students' ability to apply new knowledge and skills independently in future writing tasks.

Effective feedback within the ZPD also supports students in recognizing their progress and understanding their areas of improvement. Yang and Hu (2018) highlight that feedback that considers students' developmental stages can lead to better outcomes in writing by making the feedback process more relevant and actionable.

Furthermore, feedback within the ZPD encourages a reflective learning process. According to Zeng and Wang (2019), when feedback is tailored to students' developmental needs, it fosters a deeper understanding of writing concepts and strategies, leading to more substantial improvements in their writing skills.

How Teachers Give Feedback

Nowadays, giving feedback on the student's writing would be such as easy when it deals with the way how the teacher or the lecturers give the feedback. The pandemic era may have an influence on it. After the pandemic, some lecturers use some platforms for their teaching including providing feedback. In giving feedback, tools like Google Classroom and WhatsApp have become popular for submitting and reviewing assignments, allowing lecturers to use features like track changes for more efficient feedback. Showing that digital platforms can enhance the feedback process by making it more accessible and engaging for students (Cunningham, 2021). These platforms enable students to receive feedback quickly and in a format that is easy to revise, contributing to improved writing outcomes. The lecturers give comments and mark some errors using the features in the document file like track changes. Then, the students are required to revise their writing

based on the feedback given.

Despite the shift towards digital feedback, some lecturers still prefer traditional face-to-face methods. Lecturers 02 and 03, for example, used to give feedback directly in the classroom, where they could engage directly with students. This approach allows for immediate clarification of feedback, fostering interactive discussions that can deepen students' understanding of their writing (Ellis, 2020). Face-to-face feedback also offers a more personalized touch, which some students may find more motivating and effective for their learning.

In short, the choice between digital and face-to-face feedback methods often depends on the specific needs of students and the teaching context. While digital tools provide efficiency and accessibility, face-to-face interactions offer richer, more dynamic feedback experiences. Combining these approaches can be beneficial, allowing lecturers to capitalize on the strengths of both methods (Han & Hyland, 2019). This blended approach can enhance the overall effectiveness of feedback by ensuring that students receive both detailed written comments and the opportunity for real-time discussion.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examines the teachers' experiences in giving feedback on students' writing performance that is argumentative text. While giving feedback, most of the participants chose corrective feedback which focuses more on the grammar. It is believed that the basic thing students need to master in writing is how can they construct the idea clearly in the written form. Thus, they need to be able to apply correct grammar to their writing. It also reflects the curriculum in which the students have to write English text especially argumentative. Besides, all the aspects of the writing must be considered including the structure or written text organization, grammatical aspect, and content of the writing texts. Most participating teachers tend to provide direct feedback. They argued that they could give the feedback

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directly to the students. Others, the students can also discuss the errors with the teacher. In this way, it can confirm students' understanding regarding the correction given. Thus, the role of teacher-student discussion can enhance their competence in construction knowledge in line to the feedback from the lecturers. In short, they do the process of joint construction of new knowledge. This is strongly connected to the sociocultural approach which believes that learning is obtained from social interactions. Regarding the sociocultural perspective, lecturers should be aware of students' interests, needs, and abilities. Some of the participants have considered students' zone of proximal development in giving their feedback. They argued that students could independently correct their own errors in the future by referring to the feedback given. However, it is also considered that the students may have different types of written errors. Because it may depend on their cognitive level as well as experiences, and social interactions. Regarding the research finding, it is suggested that further research is to investigate or observe another language skill.

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