CODED VS UNCODED CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK
IN TEACHING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

Written Corrective Feedback (WFC) has been in dispute for several decades whether it is effective or ineffective. This study aims at finding out whether there is difference between students who are taught by giving indirect coded feedback and those who are given indirect uncoded feedback. Quasi experimental applied in conducting this research. 35 students in control group were given uncoded feedback, and 35 students in experimental were given coded feedback. The result of descriptive statistic revealed that indirect writing corrective feedback statistically improved the students' writing score. Furthermore, there was a significant mean difference in students' score between the students who were given coded and those who received uncoded writing corrective feedback.

Keywords: written corrective feedback, WFC, writing, descriptive

A.   INTRODUCTION

Feedback from teachers has been part of language learning since it is believed to affect the students' achievement. Teacher's feedback might be positive or negative. Positive feedback means that the students may have responded accurately as expected by the teacher. This positive feedback is allegedly to support and motivate the students to continue learning. However, teacher's positive feedback in some way may lead an ambiguous meaning, for example teacher may say "Good" or "Yes" for students' effort and not for their correct language use (Ellis, 2009). Thus, Ellis stated, positive feedback had received little attention. On the other hand, negative feedback is given when the students perform below expectation. Negative feedback aims at correcting the students. Experts have had different views "whether to correct errors, what errors to correct, how to correct then, and when to correct them" (Ellis, 2009). Negative feedback is also known as corrective feedback.

Furthermore, corrective feedback has been a contentious issue on its role in influencing students' competency especially in grammar and writing. Some argue for its efficacy, while some others contradict to it. It is stated that the issue may occur since the study is not well designed causing controversial results (Bitchener, 2008; Ellis, 2009; Ferris, Liu, Sinha, & Senna, 2012). The controversy began when Truscott claimed that error correction in students second language is harmful and ineffective (Bitchener, 2008; Eslami, 2014). He argues "grammar correction has no place in writing and should be abandoned" (Truscott, 1996). His suggestion received some counterargument that corrective feedback do affect the students'

competency in positive way (Bitchener & Ferris, n.d.; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Ferris et al., 2012; Russell & Spada, 2006; Sia & Cheung, 2017).

In spite of the different point of views, many agree that corrective feedback may be effective but influenced by several variables like instruction context, students' proficiency level, and types of writing assignments (Ahmadi-Azad, 2014). Using quasi experimental design involving seventy freshmen of English Education Study Program, this study aims at finding whether there is difference between students who are taught writing by given uncoded corrective feedback and those who are given coded corrective feedback. It hopefully can give contribution to related field.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW
1. Written Corrective Feedback
Corrective feedback is defined as "any feedback provided to a learner, from any source, that contains evidence of learner error of language form" (Russell, & Spada, 2006). Furthermore, corrective feedback may be given in oral and written. The initial is given in oral context where people have oral conversation; while the latter is given in written context usually when teacher attempts to correct student's writing product. As stated, "Written feedback is defined in the literature as any comments, questions, or error corrections that are written on students' assignments" (Agbayahoun, 2016). Therefore, written corrective feedback may be given in form-focused based (grammar), content-focused based (ideas and organization), or both.

In terms of form-focused based written corrective feedback, some research finds its effectiveness in developing students writing competency (Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 1999; Mahmoud, 2000; Sia & Cheung, 2017). Written corrective feedback may take different forms. Teacher can underline the incorrect form of language structure and give the correct one; s/he can also indicates that some mistakes have been made without informing the correct structure; s/he may give codes of error so that the student can function their grammar knowledge. The table below displays the type of teacher feedback based on Štajner (2013).

Table 1. Teacher's Written Corrective Feedback (Štajner, 2013)

Type of Teacher Feedback	Short Description
Explicit	Error indication and explanation. Correct form of the error is provided
Implicit	Teacher reformulate the students' error (recast)
Direct	Error indication and provision of correction
Indirect Coded	Error indication by a correction code.
Indirect Uncoded	Simple error indication (just providing a highlight, circle or underline) without a code of the errors
Focused	Correction of a particular types of errors
Unfocused	Correction of all errors

The table above shows different types of feedback that can be given to the students. Many research have resulted different findings. Ahmadi-azad (2014) compared students who were given direct feedback and indirect coded feedback and concluded that "coded type of WCF had a positive influence on learners' accurate use of all selected grammatical structures (especially Verb Tense) both in the short term and in the long run." Another study by Saukah, Dewanti, & Laksmi (2017), comparing indirect coded feedback and indirect uncoded feedback, showed similar result that "the quality of the students' writing receiving CCF [coded corrective feedback] was better than that receiving NCCF [non-coded corrective feedback] because CCF promotes awareness with noticing as well as understanding." They further suggest teacher to provide students coded corrective feedback. Meanwhile, Kennedy (2010) concluded that student's proficiency level plays significant role in teacher giving feedback. It is stated that student with low proficiency level should be given direct feedback or coded indirect feedback since they still need assistance in comprehending and applying the language structure.

2. Writing Competency

Writing is an activity of generating and expressing ideas and feeling through words, sentence and paragraph that is meaningful. Writing is an act of thinking. As stated, "written products are often the result of thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skills, skills that not every speaker develops naturally" (Brown, 2005:335). To be able to write, one needs to have input about what to write which can be acquired through readings. Furthermore it also involves knowledge of grammar, syntactical, mechanical, and organization of idea (Rizqiya, Pamungkas, Inayah, 2017). Therefore it is claimed that writing is both a process and product.

Writing involves several steps such as pre-writing, writing/drafting, and revising and editing. In pre-writing, the writer brainstorms or lists of what to be written. It usually in the form keywords or topic sentences. When the writer has listed the topic to be discussed, s/he may proceed to the next step. Here, the writer drafts the topic in full sentence. However, the first draft might contain flaws, either the diction, grammar, or organization of the ideas. Therefore the writer may wish to revise and edit the draft. Revise involves the addition, subtraction, and ideas reorganization. Meanwhile edit involves mechanical aspect such as punctuation. The revising and editing may be done for several times if the writer feels unsatisfied with the product. Once the writing has finished, some writer may wish to publish it or to keep it in their private journals. However some claim that the writing product should be intended to be read. Therefore the writing has its purpose whether to inform readers, entertain readers, persuade readers, or to express the writer's feeling.

In teaching writing, teacher plays three roles: as a motivator, as a resource, and as a feedback provider (Harmer, 2001). It can be implied that teacher should be a role model for the students of becoming a good writer. Teacher should have sufficient pedagogic competencies in order to make the students write better as well as good personality in order to motivate the students. Teacher is expected to give feedback to the students writing. In this case, teacher shows the students flaws in their writing with the purpose of making them better writers.

In writing in second language (L2), lack of vocabulary and lack of grammar knowledge becomes the primary issue for the students. Therefore, teacher should develop solid basis on both aspects. However, due to different cognitive competencies, some students may commit

grammar error in their writing. Students still make mistakes in language structure although the teacher has explained it previously. At this point, teacher's feedback contribute significant part in their writing.

3. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text aims at giving information about something or someone with the intention of making the readers able to imagine and feel it (Nurlaila, 2013). Descriptive text contains two Generic Structures: Identification and Description (Gerot & Wignel, 1994). In Identification, the writer describes the topic; while in Description the writer clarifies the topic (appearance, quality, or phenomenon). The lexicogrammatical features that appear in a descriptive text are *specific participant, simple present,* and *adjective* that describing, numbering, or classifying. First, specific participant since it describe something or someone to be discussed as the topic of the text. Second, present tense to show fact or behavior of the participant. Third, adjective to describe the participant. Therefore, the writers are expected to describe the topic in a lifelike way.

C. METHODOLOGY

Quantitative method with quasi-experimental design was assumed appropriate to be used in this study as it focused on finding credible answer of the effect of coded and uncoded indirect feedback on students' writing score. White & Sabarwal (2014) note that quasi experimental are more interested in finding the difference between an outcomes measured in two samples that used different teaching technique or method. In this design, hypotheses, prediction made about the expected outcomes of variables, were used (Creswell, 2014). Regarding this, the null hypothesis of this study was that there was no difference between coded and uncoded corrective feedback on students' writing descriptive skill.

Seventy second language students at English Study Program in one of institution in Cimahi were selected and purposively assigned into two groups (n=35 students in each class) receiving two feedback namely coded (experimental group) and uncoded corrective feedback (control group). They sample was second semester students who already got the basic knowledge of writing in writing for general communication course.

To collect the data needed, a comprehensive writing test was used as pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was conducted to assure that there was no difference of students' initial writing ability. Meanwhile, the post-test was used to find out the difference of coded and uncoded corrective feedback on the students' writing descriptive text. The topic of the test was covered in the students' book, which was about "who has an importance influence for you". Both of pre-test and post-test was scored by using six scale writing analytical rubric proposed by Hughes (2003). This rubric evaluated five elements of writing: grammar, vocabulary, mechanic, fluency, and organization (form).

Having taken pre-test, the students in both groups had to write a composition per two weeks for six meeting on descriptive topic covered in their books (see Table 1 for the detail activities). Students were asked to write at least 250 words in each composition in 40 minutes.

Table 1. Meetings for Data Collection

Meeting	Activities in Control Class	Activities in Experimental Class
1	The students wrote a descriptive composition 1 about people. The teacher gave uncoded corrective feedback	The students wrote a descriptive composition 1 about people. The teacher gave coded corrective feedback
2	The students got their composition 1 and revised it in the classroom. The revision were then collected to be checked.	The students got their composition 1 and revised it in the classroom. The revision were then collected to be checked.
3	The students wrote a descriptive composition 2 about home. The teacher gave uncoded corrective feedback.	The students wrote a descriptive composition 2 about home. The teacher gave coded corrective feedback.
4	The students got their composition 2 and revised it in the classroom. The revision were then collected to be checked.	The students got their composition 2 and revised it in the classroom. The revision were then collected to be checked.
5	The students wrote a descriptive composition 3 about animal. The teacher gave uncoded corrective feedback.	The students wrote a descriptive composition 3 about animal. The teacher gave coded corrective feedback.
6	The students got their composition 3 and revised it in the classroom. The revision were then collected to be checked.	The students got their composition 3 and revised it in the classroom. The revision were then collected to be checked.

The students' work was then evaluated. Experimental group students' works were corrected by using selected coded signs (see Table 2) proposed by(Ahmadi-Azad (2014) for the purpose of providing coded feedback. On the other hand, control group did not receive any instruction. The students in both groups were given 60 minutes to revise their error in accordance to the teacher's correction. Thus, they had an enough amount of time to read and check the error corrected by the teacher.

Table 2. Coded Sign

Signs	Kind of Error
V.T	Verb tense agreement
C	Capitalization
P	Punctuation
Sp	Spelling
W.F	Word formation
^	Adding something
Ø	Deleting something
W.W	Wrong word
S.V	Subject verb agreement
Pl/Sl	Plural/singular error

Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was administered to compute descriptive statistic and perform several test, such as normality, homogeneity and t-test or Man-Whitney test. Normality test was used to find out the distribution of the data, while homogeneity test was conducted to investigate the population variances.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As this study aims to investigate the difference of coded and uncoded indirect feedback on students' writing score, the elaboration of the results will be divided into two part: pre-test and post-test data. Pre-test data depict students' initial writing ability, while post-test data describe their writing ability after being treated by using coded and uncoded indirect feedback.

1. Pre-test

The analysis of pre-test data was started by finding the normality and homogeneity of the data. The statistical calculation reveals that the data in the first and second group were normal (0.159 significance value) and homogenous (0.978 significance value). The statistical descriptive result shows that the means score and standard deviation of pre-test in both groups were not quite different. The mean score of control group was 58.34 with 13.74 of standard deviation. The minimum score of this group was 23, while the maximum score was 87. On the other hand, the mean score of experimental group was 63.83 with 13.73 of standard deviation. The minimal score was 38 and the maximal score was 90.

The result of descriptive above was supported by the result of t-test, which is provided in the following table:

Table 3. Independent Samples Test of Pre-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
pretest data	Equal variances assumed	.001	.978	1.670	68	.100	5.486	3.285	-1.069	12.041
	Equal variances not assumed			1.670	68.000	.100	5.486	3.285	-1.069	12.041

The table shows that the significance value of 2-tailed (0.100) was higher than 0.05. This indicated that the students' writing ability in first and second was the same. This is in line with Sudrajat (2017) who says that if the significance value was higher than 0.05, it means that there is no difference in the variances between groups.

2. Post-test

As there is no difference of students' writing ability in control and experimental class, the next step was analysed the post-test data. Dissimilar to pre-test data, the post-test data was not homogenous (0.001). However, the statistical descriptive result indicates that there was the difference between students' writing ability in control and experimental class after the treatment was given. The score of experimental class here was higher than control one. It was proven by the mean and standard deviation score. In control class the mean score was 56.43 with 14.29 of standard deviation. The minimal score was 25 and the maximal score was 88. In contrast, the mean score of experimental class was 85.40 with 6.85of standard deviation. The minimal score was 73 and the maximal score was 98.

This difference was strengthen by the data gained from Man-Whitney test which can be seen in the following:

Table 4. Man-Whithey U Test

	Postest_data
Mann-Whitney U	33.500
Wilcoxon W	663.500
Z	-6.812
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Grouping Variable: Class

The result depicts that Asypm. Sig (2-tailed) value was 0.000. This score was lower than 0.05. Sudrajat (2017)mentions that if the significance value was lower than 0.005, it means that there is the difference of variance between control and experimental group. In other words, null hypothesis (Ho) of this study was rejected, and alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted.

The results of this present study show a strong connection between teacher's written corrective feedback and students' writing accuracy. When the students receive written corrective feedback, either coded or uncoded, they are successfully revise their writing into the good one. This is indicated by significant reduction in the number of errors that is proven by the post-test score. This finding also supports some experts that explicitly investigate the relation of written corrective feedback and students' writing accuracy (see Ferris, 1999) and state positive effect of written corrective feedback (see Hyland, 2013;Ellis, 2010; Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010)**.**

However, the other finding in this study also reveals that there is the difference impact of coded and uncoded corrective feedback, in which the first types of feedback is better than the second one. This confirms the study done by Saukah, Dewanti, & Laksmi (2017); Ahmadi-Azad (2014); and Makino (1993) which found the more coded corrective feedback resulted in successful correction of grammatical error rather than implicit one. As it has been previously discussed, in coded feedback, the teacher provides clue (sign coded) for students related to the types and the location of the error. This clue helps them to easily identify and correct their written error. On the other hand, in uncoded corrective feedback, the teacher just underlines or circles the students' error without giving any information about the types of the error they made. Thus, instead of revising the paper, the students feel confusion (Rissa,

et al, 2019). Based on Kennedy (2010) and Bhuana (2016), this condition is usually experienced by middle and low achievement students. They assume that these students still do not have a good prior knowledge of English grammar. Thus, when the teacher correct their writing by using unclued-sign, they cannot decode and understand it. Rissa, et al (2019) study even shows that most of them asked help from their friend or tutor home just to comprehend the teacher's feedback and make a revision. Therefore, it is better for the teacher to count some points before giving the correction. They should consider not only the types of correction used, but also students' proficiency levels. Giving uncoded feedback is definitely beneficial. It demand the students to have good critical thinking as they need to use their prior knowledge to revise their writing. It also saves the teacher's time especially when it applies in a big classroom. However, this types of feedback is unsuitable for some students. Hence, it is expected that the teacher can be more sensitive to their classroom condition. This is corroborated the experts (see Brown, 2007; Ferris, Liu, Sinha, & Senna, 2013; Kennedy, 2010; Bhuana, 2016) who assert that the teacher should sensitively apply method in correcting students' error as in some condition, explicit corrective feedback such coded is more valuable for some students. They really appreciate if the teacher can state the category of error instead of only make unclued-signs on their writing errors (Rizqiya, et al, 2019).

E. CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the difference of coded and uncoded indirect feedback on students' writing score. Coded corrective feedback is the use of coded sign to indicate students' written error. In this type of feedback, the students get the clue of the location and types of their error. Meanwhile, uncoded corrective feedback presents only sign to the students' written error without any clue about the location and type of errors. It needs self-understanding on how to revise the errors. This is a quasi-experimental study, where a control group is compared with an experimental group with procedures of pre- and post-treatment.

The result of descriptive statistic revealed that indirect writing corrective feedback statistically improved the students' writing score. Furthermore, there was a significant mean difference in students' score between the students who were given coded and those who received uncoded writing corrective feedback.

After conducting this study, it is suggested for further research in the similar field as this study to consider applying other type of written corrective feedback in order to have better approach in improving students' writing skill.

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APPENDICES

Writing Rubric Score (John Anderson in Hughes, 2003)

Grammar
6. Few (if any) noticeable errors of grammar or word order.
5. Some errors of grammar or word order which do not, however, interfere with comprehension.
4. Errors of grammar or word order fairly frequent; occasional re-reading necessary for full comprehension.
3. Errors of grammar or word order frequent; efforts of interpretation sometimes required on reader's part.
2. Errors of grammar or word order very frequent; reader often has to rely on own interpretation.
1. Errors of grammar or word order so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible.

Vocabulary
6. Use of vocabulary and idiom rarely (if at all) distinguishable from that of educated native writer.
5. Occasionally uses inappropriate terms or relies on circumlocutions; expression of ideas hardly impaired.
4. Uses wrong or inappropriate words fairly frequently; expression of ideas may be limited because of inadequate vocabulary.
3. Limited vocabulary and frequent errors clearly hinder expression of ideas.
2. Vocabulary so limited and so frequently misused that reader must often rely on own interpretation.
1. Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make comprehension virtually impossible.

Mechanics
6. Few (if any) noticeable lapses in punctuation or spelling.
5. Occasional lapses in punctuation or spelling which do not, however, interfere with comprehension.
4. Errors in punctuation or spelling fairly frequent; occasional re-reading necessary for full comprehension.
3. Frequent errors in spelling or punctuation; lead sometimes to obscurity.
2. Errors in spelling or punctuation so frequent that reader must often rely on own interpretation.
1. Errors in spelling or punctuation so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible.

Fluency (style and ease of communication)
6. Choice of structures and vocabulary consistently appropriate' like that of educated native writer.
5. Occasional lack of consistency in choice of structures and vocabulary which does not, however, impair overall ease of communication.
4. 'Patchy', with some structures or vocabulary items noticeably inappropriate to general style.
3. Structures or vocabulary items sometimes not only inappropriate but also misused; little sense of ease of communication.
2. Communication often impaired by completely inappropriate of misused structures or vocabulary items.
1. A 'hotch-potch' of half-learned misused structures and vocabulary items rendering communication almost possible.

Form (organization)
6. High organized; clear progression of ideas well linked; like educated native writer.
5. Material well organized; links could be occasionally be clearer but communication not impaired.
4. Some lack of organization; re-reading required for clarification of ideas.
3. Little or no attempt at connectivity, though reader can deduce some organization.
2. Individual ideas may be clear, but very difficult to deduce connection between them.

1. Lack of organization so sever that communication is seriously impaired.

SCORE:
Gramm: _____ **+ Voc:** _____ **+ Mech:** _____ **+ Fluency:** _____ **+ Form:** _____ **=** _____ **(TOTAL)**