EFL Students Responses' to Online Corrective Feedback in the Teaching of Academic Writing during the Covid-19

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* Silsilya Wahyu Nurya[1], Peptia Asrining Tyas[2]

Universitas Brawijaya, Malang

A B S T R A C T

During covid-19 pandemic, online learning is one of the alternatives that can be used by the lecturer in carrying out learning. This study aims to analyze the students' response to corrective feedback given by the lecturer during online learning. The research methodology used is a quantitative survey design. The research subjects are 140 student academic writing classes from the 2020 batch of the English Language Education Program in Universitas Brawijaya. The instrument used is questionnaires filled out online by students. They were 17 questions in four section that were distributed to investigate: 1) collecting personal information and types of online platforms used to provide corrective feedback, 2) the identification the types of error to be corrected from the student's responses, 3) students' responses for technique the lecturers should correct their errors, 4) students' responses to corrected errors by the lecturer. There were 106 responses received (88 female and 18 male students). Based on the results, overall online corrective feedback conducted by the lecturer in academic writing classes has a positive response in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic situation. Most students find the online corrective feedback in their academic writing class useful during pandemic Covid-19.

Keywords: Responses, Corrective Feedback, Teaching of Academic Writing

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a way of thinking to generate several ideas and organize these ideas into structured statements and paragraphs (Pratiwi, 2016). This writing activity is a progressive that requires several processes to be realized. Rao (2007)found that writing can help students stimulate thinking, manage student ideas, and improve students' ability to summarize, and analyze. This means that by practicing writing, the students will be able to obtain stimulation to activate their thinking process, feel the compulsion to focus and organize their ideas and produce good writing.

Especially, Lee (2008) stated that writing also requires criteria or techniques to get ideas, create them creatively, and arrange them on a well-formed basis. In learning EFL, practicing writing as a productive skill is considered one of the most challenging aspects, and difficulties in writing different types of text comes from the fact that students must understand the linguistic features of the variety of text (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Thus, EFL students in Indonesia still have difficulties in learning English, particularly in writing skills.

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*Corresponding Author: Silsilya Wahyu Nurya, e-mail: silsilyawahyu26@gmail.com

According to Bryne (2007), it is believed that writing is the most difficult skill to learn since it is a productive skill in language learning.

In addition, according to Byrne (1991), there are several difficulties related to writing: (1) There are psychological difficulties where students as writers must determine ideas and express them, (2) There are linguistic difficulties in the language used in writing. The written language is different from that used in speech. There are grammatical rules that must be observed, (3) There is a cognitive difficulty where students have to organize their ideas in the text to create a well-structured paragraph sequence. In this case, Byrne (1991) argues that in writing, students must pay attention to ideas, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Including writing classes for EFL students of the English Education Program at Brawijaya University, academic writing courses are taken by 2020 students in the fourth semester.

Besides, academic writing plays an important role in EFL students' English acquisition. Academic writing plays an important role in helping students' achieve their academic writing goals Aunurrahman et al., (2017) The experts agree that academic writing classes as a necessary skill for academics has a significant impact on the scope of students' academic writing in a university context to fulfill their degree. Similar viewpoint from Bailey (2006) who also elaborates that academic writing classes are designed for students to guide and prepare them to write academic essays with fulfilling conventions regarding the style, referencing and organization. In academic writing classes: students would be able to identify credible and suitable sources to support relevant arguments, cite, paraphrase, and/or summarize relevant sources to support arguments. Furthermore, Ratnawati et al., (2018) stated good academic writing like that build arguments based on credible evidence and sources, develop individual paragraphs that employ arguments with credible evidence and sources to support topic sentences, compose an argumentative essay with a good thesis statement supported with argument-based paragraphs so that academic writing should be developed by students in academic writing classes.

In accordance with it, students may have challenges in their academic writing classes in which students are highly effective in adopting conventions of style, references and cite. Furthermore, error in academic writing has become a natural part of learning in academic writing classes (Wahyuningsih, 2018). Meanwhile, many studies have found that providing corrective feedback (CF) is an important part of developing students' academic writing skills, showing its constructive role in providing guidance in revising students' written works and learning from mistakes in academic writing classes.

Likewise, CF can be in the form of comments, suggestions, error corrections, or questions that students can use in revising their writing (Yeh & Lo, 2009). Students also often miss some grammatical rules in student academic writing. Ghasemi et al., (2021) stated that some students make mistakes when students do not understand grammar well in their learning, especially in writing such as not paying attention to the tenses used in describing past events. Therefore, online CF by the lecturer helps the students to improve students' academic writing. This is in line with Widyaningsih (2018) argues that CF has been recognized as one of the central elements in writing classes.

However, in the world of education, it has changed drastically since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. In offline corrective feedback classes, students have direct interpersonal communication through verbal and nonverbal interactions with lecturers. These elements cannot be found in an online learning environment but must be replaced by digital interactions via text, audio, or video. Including writing classes for EFL student academic writing of the English Education Program at Brawijaya University. During pandemic, physical classrooms and direct interactions have to be changed into virtual teaching and learning. It is now important for teachers or lecturers to use technology in their teaching (Wihastyanang et al., 2020). The way lecturers provide feedback to students, such as CF in academic writing class, also automatically shifts using technology. Aini et al., (2020) mentioned that along with the increasing importance of technology to learning during the

pandemic, the heavy reliance on using technology becomes a challenge for the lecturers and students.

On the other hand, the recent development of technology in the world of education to online learning has increased the part of technology both in conveying and providing CF in teaching and learning academic writing. Seliem & Ahmed (2009) stated that the various facilities (text, audio, and video) are available and accessible to the lecturers and students to provide effective online CF during online learning. Previous studies of students' perceptions of online CF, revealed students' preference for technology-based CF to be provided in synchronous and asynchronous communication (Seliem & Ahmed, 2009). Thus, online learning provides an advantage when implemented as time constraints and geographic location constraints can be solved and correspond to distance education goals. Nevertheless, in a study by Edeiken-Cooperman & Berenato (2014) students perceived that offline CF was preferred as it was considered more detailed and connected personally with their lecturer. Nonetheless, the online CF using applications available provides assistance and support for academic teaching and learning as various functions are created for the needs of lecturer and students. The Lecturer could underline the error, add notes or comments, even use the available editing features to facilitate and point out errors in students' writing easily (Widyaningsih, 2018). Meanwhile, according to Suryoputro & Amaliah (2016) mentioned, the responses to corrective feedback have a big role in determining learning outcomes. In addition, the response is a reaction to something positive or negative and then students' responses are the most important thing in the learning carried out by the lecturers. Through student responses, lecturers can evaluate learning that has been done. In research, the response seen is the student's response after getting online CF conducted by the lecturers.

Despite the robustness of studies in this area, there are still many aspects that have not been explored. One of them is the practice of CF in online settings, especially in Indonesian EFL context. The importance of exploring CF through online practice has also increased since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why the lecturers and students around the world are implementing online learning. This can lead to online CF through the lecturer comments to support students' academic writing performance. Therefore, the researcher conducted research in the fourth-semester academic writing classes. Referring to it, this research, specifically explores how students respond to corrections given online by their lecturers on their essays. Further, it analyses student responses to online CF given by the lecturers on academic writing of EFL students of Universitas Brawijaya English Education Program during the COVID-19 pandemic.
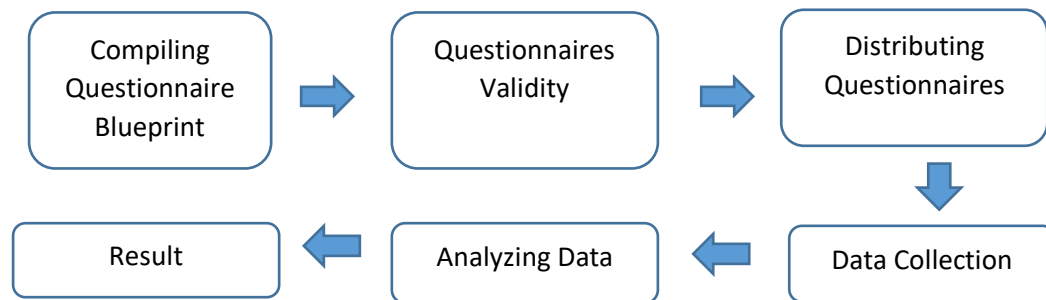
METHOD

This study used a quantitative survey design. According to Creswell (2014) survey design support to determine confidence, characteristics, and attitudes from a sample. In order to explore students' response to CF given by the lecture on EFL student academic writing of English Language Education Program, Universitas Brawijaya during COVID -19. The survey supported the researcher in obtaining the data from large numbers of respondents. The type of survey design used by the researchers was cross-sectional survey design since the data was obtained at one point in time. It is used to investigate the research problem by gathering numerical data using instruments (Creswell, 2014). The writer believes that using this method can generate the best result to solve the problem of the research.

Data and Source of the Data

Data is the main tool in the formation of numbers and facts in the field of research. The definition is supported by Arikunto (2006) he stated that data is all information obtained by the writer, either as a fact or number. The population is all of the research of the subject. The definition of population as whole members of any well-defined class (Murphy, 2016). Based on the definition, it can be concluded that the population is a group of subjects that have specific characteristics used by the researcher. In this research, the population are

students from the 2020 batch of the English Language Education Program in Universitas Brawijaya who have taken academic writing classes as respondents. The total number of all population is 140 students.

Research Procedure

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Compiling              Questionnaires              Distributing
Questionnaire      →      Validity         →      Questionnaires
Blueprint
                                                       ↓
Result        ←     Analyzing Data       ←      Data Collection
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Research Instrument

A questionnaire adapted from Lee (2008) about CF practice was employed to investigate students' perception of it as performed by the course instructors when evaluating students' writing. The authors adapted the corrective feedback survey from Lee (2008) to contextualize the student responses of online academic writing classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These questionnaires consisted of four sections with each serving a distinct purpose, including: 1) question of number 1- 2 to collecting personal information and types of online platforms used to provide feedback, 2) the identification the types of error to be corrected from the student's preference question of number 3- 6 , 3) question of number 7- 9 to students' preferences for how lecturers should correct their errors, 4) question of number 10- 17 to students' responses to corrected errors by the lecturer. The questionnaire used in this study is a likert-type survey with five scale ranges. The respondents needed to choose the answer between 1 to 5 with the following conditions.

Category	Scale
SD=Strongly Disagree	1
D =Disagree	2
N =Neutral	3
A =Agree	4
SA=Strongly Agree	5

Before the researcher distributed questionnaires to the students, the writer did try out those statements. The purpose of the tryout was to find out how many statements will be valid or invalid. After conducting the tryout in 30 students, the researcher analyzed the data to determine the validity and reliability using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) ver. 25.0. Based on the validity and reliability test result, invalid questions are deleted. It is known that 17 out of 20 questions are valid and reliable and the cronbach alpha from analysis was 0, 94. According to Dalyanto et al., (2021) a variable to give reliability if the cronbach alpha values > 0.60. It means that the questionnaire design in this study can be said to be reliable.

Data Collection

The questionnaire adapted from Lee (2008) was then distributed through Google Forms to all students in the academic writing batch 2020 in the fourth semester of 140 student population. Distributed the questionnaire constructed in Google Forms via WhatsApp personal and Group Chat to students in the academic writing batch 2020. There were 106 responses received (88 female and 18 male students). During the 2 months of completing this online questionnaire, the anonymity of the students was strictly maintained to give them the freedom to express their attitudes and responses to CF. The sample does not fulfill population values due to limited time and online constraints. These were further analyzed by a variety of procedures that will be explained below.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data generated from close-ended questions from Google Form was imported into a Microsoft Excel file and then stored in an analytical database inside the Excel workbook. The researcher classified the answer and calculated it using SPSS ver. 25.0 and Microsoft Excel 2013 to analyze validity and credibility. The tables in Excel were organized into tabbed pages in the Pivot window. Finally, the results were presented in charts. The writer discussed the results based on the items in the questionnaire.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first section of the questionnaire aims to investigate personal information and platforms used to provide CF by the lecturer during online academic writing classes. Regarding this, both students and lecturers engaged in online teaching and learning activities through a variety of platforms, such as synchronous sections: Google Meet, Zoom, and then asynchronous sections such as WhatsApp, Google Classroom, and Google document which they considered easy to use, practical/efficient, and real-time in terms of providing feedback because they are linked to their class online in this case, students received CF from the lecturer regarding their academic writing assignments.

Table 1. Personal information and platform used to provide corrective feedback.

	Email	Telegram	WhatsApp	Google Document	Google Classroom	Zoom/GMeet
1. What kind of online platform does your English lecturer use to provide corrective feedback on your essay/report during online academic writing classes?	0%	0%	46,3%	76,4%	89,6%	84%
2. Which platform do you prefer for corrective feedback during online academic writing classes?	0%	0%	60,4%	83%	87,7%	86,8%

The data analysis revealed that almost all of the respondents used Google Classroom, Google Meet/Zoom, Google document, and other platforms such as WhatsApp. It provided suitable platforms for students' needs in teaching academic writing online such as in teaching and learning, sharing materials, assigning assignments, collecting assignments, and giving corrective feedback. Meanwhile, of applications available, Zoom/Gmeet, Google Classroom, Google document, and WhatsApp are students' favorite platforms as a medium to communicate and provide CF to students. From the data, the platform used by lecturers is in accordance with what students need. Therefore, students are more likely to choose online CF because they can access feedback anytime and anywhere Warschauer & Ware (2006).

During covid-19, the researcher found that online corrective feedback in academic writing provides an advantage when implemented as time and geographic location constraints can be overcome and distance education goals. As such, Google classroom can still be used even though offline learning is in teaching academic writing such as giving material and collecting assignments because it is more structured. This is in line with Nanthinii (2020) found that Google Classroom (GC) is one of the popular applications used by educators and students because it is interactive, student-centered, and convenient to collect assignments. The further integration of technology in education does not reduce the appreciation of offline learning. Furthermore, Jiang et al., (2021) present that the value of personal offline learning interaction remains clear, thus that the relationship between offline and online CF is complementary.

Table 2. Students' responses for online corrective feedback types in academic writing classes.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
3. I prefer the lecturer to provide corrective feedback on the grammatical errors of my writing during online writing classes.	0%	0%	0%	40,4%	59,6%
4. I prefer the lecturer to provide corrective feedback on using APA for in-text citations and reference lists on my writing during online writing classes. (To adopt conventions of style, references, and cite.)	0%	0%	5,7%	34,4%	59,9%
5. I prefer the lecturer to provide corrective feedback on the content of my writing during online writing classes.	0%	8,3%	11,3%	30,5%	49,9%
6. I prefer the lecturer to provide corrective feedback on the overall quality of my writing during online writing classes.	0%	0%	3,4%	36,7%	59,9%

Table 2 shows students' responses that comments on grammar, APA style, content, and overall writing quality are among the most important from the lecturers with positive responses for each category. The fact that the grammatical aspect is the type of error that students want is perceived by the lecturer to be corrected. In this case, the findings are in line with a previous study of Ghasemi (2021) who found that grammar is considered as basic knowledge that must be mastered thus there is no misunderstanding by the reader.

In addition, they believe that it is an important element in academic writing and perceive that choosing grammar errors to be corrected could improve their level of understanding of grammar. These findings supported by Hussein (2020) and Ghasemi et al., (2021) proved that there is a strong relationship between error correction and grammatical accuracy. However, it is not in line with Chen et al., (2016) who found that most participants perceived content as the most important error type for correction. This indicates that compared to students in offline writing class, students in online writing class can either have the same or different preferences in terms of mistakes for correction. Consequently, students should be equally taught about the importance of all aspects in academic writing. While CF on correct use of American Psychological Association (APA) for in-text citations and references in academic writing is important as is helping to avoid plagiarism by clarifying which ideas the author has and those of others. Stated by Clark & Murphy (2021) cite sources properly to ensure that students do not plagiarize helpful ideas and information in their work. In addition, it provides supporting evidence for ideas, arguments, and opinions.

Table 3. Students' responses for online corrective feedback techniques in academic writing classes.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
7. I prefer the error correction feedback technique given by the lecturer with underlining the mistake and then pointing me to a source for information in my writing.	0%	0%	5%	40,6%	54,4%
8. I prefer the error correction feedback technique given by the lecturer with correcting the mistake and explanation for the mistake in my writing.	0%	2,8%	4,7%	26%	66,5%
9. I prefer the error correction feedback technique given by the lecturer with underlining the error without indicating the type of error.	7.3%	48,4%	30%	10,8%	3,5%

Table 3 clearly shows that the technique of correcting the mistake and explanation for the parts being corrected is the technique of error correction most preferred by the students during the online CF practice. Following this, underlining the mistake and then pointing the type of error for the parts being corrected became the second highest desired technique of

error correction. Conversely, the technique of simply indicating an error in the students' texts to it without underline and correcting the mistake is the least preferable technique as suggested by the students.

The three parts of the questionnaire were designed to evaluate students' responses for technique of indicating errors. The result indicates that locating and indicating the types of errors is considered the most important strategy. This finding is consistent with the previous research by Lee (2008) who found that most participants preferred their lecturer to indicate their error. However, in practice, this result is different from a study by Edeiken-Cooperman & Berenato revealing (2014) that students preferred CF in which their errors are directly revised by their lecturer and then they clarified that it could help them reflect on their mistakes and motivate them to continue learning. It implies that students in an online setting can have the same or different responses on CF strategy compared to previous studies in offline writing classes.

Table 4. Students' responses of online corrective feedback by the lecturer in academic writing classes.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
10. Corrective feedback during online writing classes is essential for me to improve my writing skills.	0%	2%	7,4%	59,8%	30,8%
11. Online corrective feedback is important for me to correct errors in online writing classes.	0%	0%	8,5 %	37%	54,5%
12. The online consultation provided by my lecturer gave me more opportunities to ask for corrective feedback that I could not understand.	0%	0%	8,5%	49,4%	42,1%
13. I don't have a problem when the lecturer gives correcting feedback online in academic writing class.	0%	0%	3,4%	36,5%	60,1%
14. I feel a better impact and the benefits of corrective feedback from the lecturer in the academic writing class during online learning.	0%	0%	3,2%	30,5%	66,3%
15. I understand the corrective feedback given by my lecturer of my writing during online writing classes.	0%	0%	19,2%	50,3%	30,5%
16. I will read/listen and correct the main errors from the correction feedback in my writing given by the lecturer.	0%	0%	7,4%	37%	55,6%
17. I will carefully read and correct the errors from the correction feedback in my writing given by the lecturer.	0%	0%	9,1%	40,7%	50,2%

Based on the question items above, most of the student's responses had positive responses to the improvement and importance of error correction in online academic writing classes. Including opportunities to learn and improve their writing skills and reflect on their previous mistakes. It is in line with Lee (2008) stating that in addition to research on the effectiveness of corrective feedback on the students' academic writing, it is also looking at students' responses of CF is important for learning goals. Students also recognize the importance of correcting errors as identified from CF online the practice of preventing them from making another mistake. Yeh & Lo (2009) mentions that getting feedback and comments from lecturers is an integral part of "a learning process that involves trial and error." From this statement, learning requires a process of making mistakes and evaluating them. Furthermore, by evaluating errors, students will be able to understand new knowledge and understanding to "better understand the mistakes (that students) make, so that in the future" students will not make mistakes again."

Besides, most students do not have a problem related to online CF in academic writing class during covid-19. This supports previous studies Edeiken-Cooperman & Berenato (2014) claim that students get better impact and the benefits of CF from the lecturer. In relation to the follow-up actions or activities that will be conducted by the students after receiving online CF from the lecturer, from the data dominant of the total students asserted that students will be careful to read/listen and correct the comments and address all the

errors being identified by the lecturer in online learning. As mentioned by Yeh and Lo (2009), they stated that online learning uses technology and language learning where students and lecturers examine the impact of technology on teaching writing. This is also in line with Aini et al., (2020) she statement that many researchers have been discovering new type learning innovations that are longer limited by constraints of face-to-face conferencing.

In Addition to the responses student data, they benefit from the use of technology in academic writing classes during online learning. Stepp-Greany (2002) found that the technology used increased the students' learning motivation, made them be more active learners in processing writing skill. The internet technology and education plays a major role in English learning.

Furthermore, students gave a positive response to the online CF given by the lecturer. One of the writing processes is doing CF to make good writing. It is important for the lecturer to give students time to make revisions. It is also in line with Ghasemi (2021), CF focuses on the writing process that help students to understand their error writing, help them to build strategies for prewriting, drafting, and giving the students time to revise. Based on the research findings above, it has similarities in the importance of the academic writing process. The students' responses in terms of action are shown when the students revise and give revision of their academic writing to their lecturer.

CONCLUSIONS

Corrective feedback provided online through online platforms was positively perceived by most of the students in developing their academic writing skills. This is because the online platforms are easy to use, practical, and promote real-time feedback in which the lecturer and students simultaneously provide and obtain feedback online. The results of the research show that student responses regarding corrective feedback by lecturers are still very helpful and provide many benefits even though online learning is during a pandemic. On the positive side, during the pandemic, the lecturer made a learning model that made it easier for students to get online corrective feedback correctly. Namely by using Google Documents in written CF, using zoom meetings in speaking and listening CF, using G-Classroom to submit assignments, then using the WhatsApp application to share information, which is a student's need during online learning has been provided properly. Next, students' responses in academic writing classes about grammar are considered the most important type of errors due to its impact on grammatical accuracy. However, due to the importance of the other aspects such as, using APA in academic writing classes for in-text citations and reference lists, and the overall quality, students need to be equally taught and emphasized. Academic writing builds arguments based on credible evidence and sources. Further, according to student responses in academic writing locating errors and indicating the type of errors is perceived as the most important strategy. Interestingly, although being conducted online for the first time due to COVID-19, the respondents highly value CF online by the lecturer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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