STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHER’S INDIRECT WRITTEN FEEDBACK IN PROCEDURAL WRITING COURSE

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
2015
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STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHER’S INDIRECT WRITTEN FEEDBACK IN PROCEDURAL WRITING COURSE

Ulya Rahma Diane

ABSTRACT

Students in the Procedural Writing Course are the first year students who just passed the preceding writing course, Creative Writing. In this level, students certainly require much and appropriate feedback from teachers to improve their writing. In regard to that, this study has the purpose to uncover students’ attitudes toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in the Procedural Writing course so that more effective teacher feedback can be provided to address students’ problems in writing. This study is qualitative research in which students’ attitudes can be found using an interview. A total of 12 participants were purposely chosen from three classes of Procedural Writing Course in English Teacher Education Program of the Faculty of Language and Literature, Satya Wacana Christian University. The findings revealed that teacher’s indirect written feedback is considered important and helpful to facilitate students for revising and train students to be independent writers even though they find some difficulties utilizing the symbols given at first. To make it more effective, teachers should really consider the appropriate ways to provide understandable feedback to help students understand the symbols’ meaning as well as to avoid negative reactions, feelings, and misunderstanding related to the utilization of the feedback.

Keywords: students’ attitudes, teacher’s indirect written feedback

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a skill that cannot be acquired easily. Thus, there are five courses in the English Teacher Education Program, Faculty of Language and Literature (FLL), Satya Wacana Christian University (SWCU) that are offered to support the process of achieving the students’ writing skill. The courses are Creative Writing, Procedural Writing, Narrative and Descriptive Writing,
Expository and Argumentative Writing, and Academic Writing. These courses concern with preparing and training students to write in a second language, particularly in English.

The study is going to focus on one of the courses, which is Procedural Writing Course. Usually, the students who take this class are those who are in their third semester. Therefore, students’ writing skill in the Procedural Writing Course is considered to be in the beginning level. Looking at this condition, the students certainly require much and appropriate feedback from teachers. Students at the beginning level have just started to develop their ability to compose a piece of writing and they may not have adequate knowledge to do correction themselves (Brown, 1994; Ferris and Hedgcock, 2004). This means that the teachers’ feedback in the students writing products plays an important role to assist them in creating better writing compositions.

In addition, Lalande (1982, as cited in Banu, 2011) supports the last statement above by saying that learners require detailed feedback to develop their skill in writing, because they may find difficulties to correct their mistakes if teachers do not help them to show their errors. Therefore, the teachers as instructors need to find appropriate ways to help the students solving their problems in writing. It becomes a challenge for the teachers to improve their students’ writing ability through giving feedback in their writing.

Most students in the Procedural Writing Course consider the teacher’s feedback as something important. This is based on my experience taking and finishing all writing courses in the English Teacher Education Program, FLL,
SWCU. I learnt that students needed teacher’s help to deal with errors on their drafts. Students could see their mistakes if teachers gave feedback and pointed out students’ errors. Feedback, the kind of comments, suggestions or criticism for some components in someone’s writing work, is the key point in improving writing, as it is believed to be the media to stimulate learning (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Moreover, teacher’s indirect written feedback is urgent in students writing learning process. Through indirect feedback, teachers give a chance for students to do self-correction (Chandler, 2003). In line with that, a study by Bartram and Walton (1991) found that, “feedback holds the role as stimulation for learners to be active in learning activities, to produce cooperative atmosphere in teaching and learning process and to enhance learners to do learning independently” (p. 87-91). Therefore, to avoid any misunderstanding in interpreting the teachers’ feedback, a clear meaning of the symbols used in teacher’s written feedback should be defined briefly to the students, such as circles to indicate errors in terms of word choices, “SP” to indicate spelling mistakes, a “^” symbol to indicate that a word or a phrase should be inserted, and a wavy underline “_______“ to indicate a confusing sentence.

Since receiving indirect written feedback is relatively new experiences for those first year’s students, I consider that it is important to find out about their attitudes toward teacher’s indirect written feedback. A study was previously done by Tri Buce J. Banu in 2011. The study that consisted of 17 participants who were purposely chosen from a group of Guided Writing classes in the English Teacher Education Program, FLL, SWCU in 2011 found that the majority of
students preferred to get teacher’s indirect written feedback even though they found problems utilizing the symbols given, particularly those with multiple meanings.

Based on the previous study, I want to conduct a similar study in a different context. I have the curiosity to explore the practice of indirect written feedback in the Procedural Writing Course in the English Teacher Education Program, FLL, SWCU. The Guided Writing classes that was once applied in 2011 and became Banu's (2011) research object and the Procedural Writing Course in the new curriculum of 2014 that is examined in this study are both classified as the basic level of writing in FLL, SWCU. Therefore, I would like to know whether the findings in this study will be similar to or different from Banu’s (2011) findings.

Furthermore, since pair work is applied in the Procedural Writing Course before students work individually, I am also interested in knowing more about students’ attitudes toward teacher’s indirect written feedback when they work in pairs as compared to when they work individually.

This study was expected to give insight to the teachers concerning the students’ attitudes specifically toward the indirect written feedback given in the Procedural Writing Course. Based on the discussion above, the study is conducted to answer the following research question:

What are students’ attitudes toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in Procedural Writing Course?
LITERATURE REVIEW

I. Attitudes

The different comprehension toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in Procedural Writing Course may cause different attitudes from students. Attitude refers to thoughts, feelings, and behavioral intentions that determine our predescription toward people, situation, events, and things (Ross 1994). According to Eagly & Chaiken (2007), attitude means the tendency of a person to do evaluation of an attitude object with some degree of favorability and unfavorability. This evaluation involves beliefs, thoughts, emotions, intention and behavior, and results in evaluative responding whether it is obvious or unobvious, cognitive, affective, or behavioral. In short, attitude can be described as the way a person does an evaluation and gives reaction toward something. Furthermore, Wenden (1991) also describes attitude as learners’ motivations, valued beliefs evaluations, and what is believed to be acceptable or unacceptable. In other words, or it can be said that attitudes are responses oriented towards approaching or avoiding.

Although in some points there are some similarities about the definition of attitude, this study adapts the definition from Ross (1994), that is, attitude is defined as thoughts, feelings, and behavioral intentions that determine our predescription toward teacher’s indirect written feedback. Thus, the participants of this study are expected to reveal their true feelings about teacher’s indirect written feedback. In addition, they are also asked to explain their behavioral intentions after receiving the feedback (what they do after receiving the teacher’s feedback).
II. Teacher’s Indirect Written Feedback

“Feedback may be defined as information supplied to students concerning some aspect of their performance on a task, by a peer or a teacher, with a view to improving language skills. It includes not only correcting students, but also assessing them” (Harmer, 2000). During the learning process, not all student errors should be corrected because errors are common and unavoidable.

The nature of teacher feedback differs widely among teachers and classes depending on such factors as course objectives, assignment objectives, marking criteria, individual student expectations, strengths, weaknesses, and attitude toward writing (Harmer, 2000). Furthermore, Williams (2003) adds that teacher’s feedback is an important aspect of any English language writing course where the teacher gives the corrections and comments on the students’ drafts.

Furthermore, Scott (1996) classifies teacher’s written feedback into direct and indirect written feedback. Direct written feedback is a kind of feedback in which teachers point out and correct students’ errors directly by providing the correct form, while indirect feedback is a kind of feedback in which teachers only indicate the area of the error to point out that an error has occurred in the process of writing but does not provide any correction (e.g. write “SP” to indicate the spelling mistakes) (Banu, 2011).

There is strong evidence that indirect written feedback is more helpful for students’ long-term writing development than direct written feedback (Ferris, 2006). Some studies (Ashwell, 2000; Chen1997; Saito, 1994) show how teachers use indirect way of giving feedback with the use of marking codes for their
students. Teachers only underline, cross out, circle, code, or give other marks (symbols) without directly giving the correct form of the error. For example: the symbol “SP” is used to signal spelling mistakes whereas underlining and circling are used to indicate where the mistakes are in order to hint students to self-correct their mistakes. Moreover, any comments and symbols that are used in the correction of students’ writing drafts help students to develop their writing skills.

Ferris & Robert (2001) show how the students’ attitude toward teacher’s feedback is. According to Ferris and Robert (2001, as cited in Schulz, 1996) many university students support the indirect way of giving feedback as they like their teacher to indicate their grammar mistakes and give them hints on how they should self-correct their grammar mistakes so they could move along the path to master English. By doing self-correction, they could prevent the bad habit of making the same mistakes again and again. Besides, it encourages students to get improvement and solve their problems in writing by themselves.

In addition, teachers can also be helpful facilitators who offer support and guidance for students on writing (Ferris, 2003). Students can easily express their ideas in writing by learning from those comments and symbols given by teachers that indirectly stated in their writing. This idea is strengthened by Hyland (2000) who affirms that the authority of the teacher influences the students to accept their feedback.

In brief, from the explanation above I can conclude that indirect written feedback is important for the students’ writing proficiency, let alone in their long-term writing development (Ferris, 2006).
THE STUDY

A. Type of Research

This study is a qualitative research study. Following Bryman (2001) and McKay (2006), as cited in Zacharias (2013), this study involved a small number of participants and aimed to describe students’ attitude toward the written feedback given by the teachers based on the participants’ own words.

B. Context of the Study

To answer the research question considering students’ attitudes toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in Procedural Writing Course, the study was conducted in the English Teacher Education Program, FLL, SWCU. The faculty is located in Salatiga, a small town in Central Java, Indonesia. It is a department that prepares its students to be well-qualified English teachers. There are a lot of courses offered in this department. One of the courses is Procedural Writing course as the second level of writing after Creative Writing Course. This course concerns to enable students to write pieces of writing which show series of procedures (procedural essays).

C. Participants

There were 12 students who participated in my research. They came from three out of six classes of the Procedural Writing Course and there were 4 students who represented each class. I only did research in three classes because after I asked, three of the lecturers were using direct written feedback in giving their feedback. The participants were considered appropriate and meeting the criteria because they were in the first year of studying in the English Teacher Education
Program, FLL, SWCU. Different from the previous study that did the research by involving the students and their individual writing drafts, in this study I involved the students and their collaborative (in pairs) and individual writing drafts, so that I can compare their attitudes when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work and in individual work. Furthermore, even though the students have already experienced getting the feedback from their teachers in previous writing, which is Creative Writing, their basic knowledge about indirect written feedback was also still limited. It can be seen from their writing drafts in this course. Students in this Procedural Writing Course were the beginners who may find difficulties in interpreting the symbols given when they wanted to complete their assignments. Thus, they required much input and many suggestions in the form of feedback from their teacher.

D. Instrument of Data Collection

To collect the data qualitatively, through interviews, I used interview questions as the instrument to collect the data from the selected participants. As said by Wallace (2006), interview questions help to organize knowledge, opinions, ideas, and participant’s experience. The interview questions that I used were adapted from Tri Buce J. Banu’s journal article entitled “Students’ Perception on Teacher Indirect Written Feedback in Guided Writing Course”. The reason why I adapted all of his interview questions is because they were really appropriate with my topic and also my theories in literature review that I explained before. However, to match with the need of this study, I added one more question so that there were 6 questions in total. The additional question was:
Is there any difference in initial reaction or strategy when you received teacher’s indirect written feedback when in pair work and individual work? This question was used to find out whether there were different attitudes toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair and in individual work.

In this study, I also conducted the interview to the students in Procedural Writing Course after collecting their second collaborative essays and their individual essays which contained teacher’s feedback and asked them the meaning of the symbols to find out whether they knew the meaning and understood the symbols or not. The reason of using this kind of instrument is that students would be more flexible and free to express their own opinions and give their arguments about a certain topic which was asked. It gave me a chance to get rich data because I did not prepare the possible answers to the given questions.

Altogether, there were 6 main questions asked to find out the information needed to accomplish the research. There were also follow-up questions along the interview process if unexpected responses were given by the participants. (See Appendix for the interview questions).

E. Procedures of Data Collection

There were some steps that I used as the researcher to collect the data. First, the researcher asked teachers’ permission in the Procedural Writing Course to collect the first draft of students’ second collaborative essay and the first draft of students’ individual essay with teacher’s feedback. Then, the researcher copied students’ writing and tried to find out which one is containing a lot of teacher’s
indirect written feedback. Since there were various uses of teacher’s indirect written feedback forms, I tried to look for the meaning of their indirect written feedback. The researcher made appointments with the participants that were willing to be interviewed. Then, the researcher set the time for the interview. The interview stage was conducted in which the participants were given the opportunity to express their opinions, feelings and experiences about the use of indirect written feedback in correcting errors on their writing drafts. It was done informally for 5 to 10 minutes and all the data was recorded.

F. Data Analysis

There were some steps that I used as the researcher to analyze the data gathered. First, I transcribed the recording of the interview. After that, I reread the data several times to comprehend the similar, different, or even new information in which the participants uttered. I also classified those responses according to the questions which were asked to answer the research question, then interpreted them using descriptive written explanation, as suggested by Lynch (1996).

DISCUSSION

This section would discuss and analyze the finding as the answer from the research question “What are students’ attitudes toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in Procedural Writing Course?” The data categorizations are students’ opinions toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in general, students’ initial reactions toward teacher’s indirect written feedback, students’ opinion specifically
toward teacher’s indirect written feedback given, students’ strategies to deal with teacher’s indirect written feedback, students’ suggestion in improving the application of teacher’s indirect written feedback and improving their writing ability and differences in students’ initial reaction or strategy when received teacher’s indirect written feedback when in pair work and individual work. Besides that, at the end of every section of the discussion I would also compare my result with the previous study conducted by Banu (2011).

Students’ Opinions toward Teacher’s Indirect Written Feedback in General

At the beginning of the interview, I asked my participants about the definition or what they have known about teacher’s indirect written feedback and they could answer it well. As stated by S7 and S9:

Teacher’s indirect written feedback is written feedback given by teachers by using symbols. (S7, April, 1st 2015)

Teacher’s indirect written feedback is feedback from the teacher by using signs or certain symbols. (S9, April, 8th 2015)

From the definitions of teacher’s indirect written feedback uttered by the students, it shows that they had good comprehension on what is meant by teacher’s indirect written feedback. The result of the interview indicated that some participants that were interviewed expressed their opinions by showing that teacher indirect written feedback was basically important and helpful for their writing. It was revealed as the quotations of S8, S12, and S2:

I think teacher’s indirect written feedback is very important and helpful for us to correct our mistake in writing. (S8, April, 8th 2015)

Teacher’s indirect written feedback is very helpful to revise my writing. (S12, April, 9th 2015)
The quotations above describe the students’ opinions toward indirect written feedback as something that was very valuable and important for them. Through indirect written feedback given by teacher, the students were able to do the correction in which part they should correct or revise their writing. Besides, the participants uttered that through indirect written feedback teacher could help the students to evaluate and help them how to do the correction in writing. As stated by S2:

In my opinion, teacher’s indirect written feedback is very helpful for the students to evaluate their writing. Teacher’s indirect written feedback can also be used to monitor students’ development in writing. (S2, March, 31st 2015)

Another opinion stated by S5 claimed that through teacher’s indirect written feedback the student could minimize their mistakes, such as grammatical errors:

… Teacher’s indirect written feedback helps us to complete our writings that we made. From indirect written feedback given by teacher we can figure out if for example the grammar is wrong… Not only that, it also becomes our experience to know the writing technique of making good procedural text. (S5, April, 1st 2015)

The quotation above describes the situation in which the student as the writer would not certainly be able to do correction if he did not know how to correct the mistakes. He required teacher’s help to show his mistakes to correct. That is why written feedback from teacher was valuable to help the students reduce their errors over time.

In contrast, one of the students uttered a different argument showing dissatisfaction toward written feedback itself. He asserted that sometimes, the application of teacher indirect written feedback was out of his expectation.
I think teacher’s indirect written feedback is not effective enough because the teacher does not tell every meaning of the symbol in our writing draft. (S10, April, 8th 2015)

As a consequence, the students made mistakes in interpreting the feedback given. It was difficult for them to make use of teacher’s indirect written feedback to do the correction. To avoid students’ dissatisfaction and misunderstanding, teachers should remind the students about the symbols and give clear meaning from the symbols given. One of the students also uttered:

Teacher’s indirect written feedback is helpful but also confusing. (S3, March, 31st 2015)

The opinion above shows that the student considered teacher’s indirect written feedback as something that was helpful for her writing. However, she still required some explanations in order to attain better understanding of certain symbols that she considered confusing. She needed teacher’s indirect written feedback to be clarified and provided in details.

From this section, it can be inferred that the finding is similar to the previous study (Banu, 2011) that feedback was considered important and helpful for most students because it gave them a chance to do correction so that they could improve their writing.

However, to get good and accurate writing result, teachers should really consider the appropriate ways to provide understandable feedback according to what students need. When students understand the feedback and be able to utilize it, they will probably be able to improve their ability in writing.

Students’ Initial Reactions toward Teacher’s Indirect Written Feedback
Students uttered different initial reactions when accepting this kind of feedback. One of the students uttered that he had common reaction toward teacher’s indirect written feedback. It can be seen from the quotation of S5 below:

… I am sure that I did it well, but then there are so many mistakes and indirect written feedback in my draft. That is learning. My reaction is I tried to accept the feedback and I am just feeling common, but then I tried to revise it. (S5, April, 1st 2015)

The opinion above implied a condition in which the student considers teacher’s indirect written feedback as something that is not special. He thought that teacher’s indirect written feedback is a part of learning process. However, indirect written feedback given by the teacher also motivates him to revise his draft better.

Furthermore, another student uttered that she was confused and even shocked after receiving teacher’s indirect written feedback.

The initial reaction was I got confused, because the feedback is in the form of symbols and there is no explanation about it. Well, what I mean is, where the mistakes are and what mistakes should be revised. It was a little bit confusing if it is indirect written feedback. (S6, April 1st 2015)

The quotation above describes the situation in which the student faced difficult conditions to use the feedback especially to determine the appropriate function of a certain symbol. Students may not know how to use it in a revision (Chapin & Terdal, 1990; Cohen, 1991; Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Goldstein & Kohls, 2002). Moreover, it was something they had never experienced before.

Besides that, S7 also uttered that some symbols given by teacher did not exist and it made him delay the revision process in writing.

At the beginning of the class the meanings of the symbols have already explained, but I do not know the meaning for some symbols.
I have noted, but there are some symbols that do not exist. So I do not know what to do, and it delayed the revision process. (S7, April 1st 2015)

Even though teachers have explained the meaning of the symbols, sometimes some symbols do not exist. The use of too many symbols on the learner’s drafts can delay the revision process of the students.

Some other opinions stated by S9 and S12 that teacher’s indirect written feedback also made them shocked, especially when they accept indirect written feedback in individual writing.

Do not know what to do… In individual writing I felt shocked because writing is very difficult. (S9, April 8th 2015)

For individual essay I felt shocked when I accepted teacher’s indirect written feedback, and I was so confused. (S12, April, 9th 2015)

The quotations above describe the situation in which the students as writers felt shocked after receiving teacher’s indirect written feedback to revise their writing. The students realized that writing was not an easy process.

Another opinion stated by S8 that she had a problem with different symbols given but as time went by, she was accustomed with the symbols.

I think indirect written feedback was initially confusing, but after I get accustomed to it, it is not confusing anymore. I was confused because there were so many different symbols. (S8, April 8th 2015)

From this section, it can be concluded that the use of symbols on students’ draft caused different initial reactions such as ordinary, confusion, and shock. The finding is a little bit different from Banu (2011), which found that students were surprised, confused, and shocked. In my study, one of the students felt ordinary when he received teacher’s indirect written feedback because he thought that it
was a part of the learning process. In addition, the different meaning of the symbols in teacher’s indirect written feedback made some students feel confused and caused revision process in writing hampered.

In short, in this study, the students thought that indirect written feedback given by teacher is a part of the learning process. Teacher indirect written feedback can be considered as one of the ways to revise students’ writing better.

**Students’ Opinion Specifically toward Teacher’s Indirect Written Feedback Given**

Different attitudes come up based on students’ comprehension towards the feedback. Some participants expressed that teacher’s indirect written feedback was very helpful for them to do revision. Students thought after they accept indirect written feedback given by teacher, it was easier for them to correct their errors because they knew the location of their mistakes. Thus, they can do the revision better and automatically it improves their ability to write. Their interpretations were represented by S2 and S6 as the following quotations:

… When teacher gave indirect written feedback we can identify the location of our mistakes. We can do the revision better and it can improve our ability to write. (S2, March, 31st 2015)

I think teacher’s indirect written feedback is helpful for us to do the revision in writing so that our writing becomes better… we can recognize the location of our mistake, we can do the revision and it improves our writing. (S6, April, 1st 2015)

The students’ opinion above points out that through teacher’s indirect written feedback, they can figure out the location where they make mistakes in writing which automatically make them easier to revise and improve their writing.
They can also recognize their weaknesses easily and get the opportunity to develop their confidence through self-correction. As stated by Lalande (1982), indirect written feedback can also guide learning and help students overcome problems by themselves.

Besides that, another benefit from teacher’s indirect written feedback is it is challenging for the students. It makes them more independent and more creative in writing.

I think teacher’s indirect written feedback is good, quite challenging. We are required to know our mistake instead of just being told this part is wrong. Through indirect written feedback, teacher guides us to find out where our mistakes are in our writing. (S7, April, 1st 2015)

Teacher’s indirect written feedback is very helpful because it is easier for students to make revisions, make the student becomes more independent. It is also challenging and make the student becomes more creative in writing. (S9, April 8th 2015)

The advantages of indirect written feedback were varying uttered by the students. On the other hand, the students can recognize their weaknesses easily and get the opportunity to develop their confidence through self-correction. Indirect written feedback can also guide learning and help students overcome problems by themselves (Lalande, 1982).

From this section, it can be inferred that indirect written feedback is beneficial for both teachers and students. It creates an atmosphere in which teachers are easier to indicate students’ errors. Besides that, it trains students to think critically to do correction. Not only that, it also gives opportunity for students to build their confidence through self-correction without completely relying on teachers.
Furthermore, the students’ also stated teacher’s indirect written feedback has advantages and disadvantages. There were some opinions showing that on one side, teacher’s indirect written feedback is helpful but on the other side’s teacher’s indirect written feedback was confusing for the students.

As I said before, teacher’s indirect written feedback is very helpful for the students to do correction in their essay… But the weaknesses for the beginner like me, I felt confused to understand the errors in writing because teacher’s indirect written feedback uses many kinds of symbols and I think many of the students do not know or have never been encountered with such corrections. (S11, April, 9th 2015)

On one side, teacher’s indirect written feedback is very helpful… On the other sides, teacher’s indirect written is confusing. The advantages from teacher’s indirect written feedback are I can revise and I know the mistakes. The problem is I forgot the meaning of certain symbols. If for example I do not know how to correct them, then it makes me dizzy. (S12, April 9th, 2015)

Those opinions uttered by the students show that teacher’s indirect written feedback caused problems for the ones who received it. As beginners, the students found difficulties because there are so many symbols in teacher’s indirect written feedback. (Brown, 1994; Ferris and Hedgcock, 1998, 2004 as cited in Banu 2011) said that students at lower level are still lack of linguistic knowledge to do correction by themselves even if there are errors pointed. Students as writers, require clear meaning of symbols given in order to develop their writing ability.

In contrast, one of the students said that teacher’s indirect written feedback was not effective if teacher did not give the meaning of the symbols at the beginning of the first meeting.

As I said before, I think teacher’s indirect written feedback is not effective if teacher did not give the meaning of the symbols at the beginning of the first meeting… Overall, I prefer not to like teacher’s indirect written feedback because it is not clear. I want that
teacher directly point out what the mistakes are. (S10, April, 8th, 2015)

From this section, it can be concluded that the use of that teacher’s indirect written feedback is not effective. For certain learner, teacher’s indirect written feedback is not clear and hard to be understood. This is in line with Straub (1997) study, stated that students will not be able to do correction if they feel that the feedback is hasty, inconsistent, unclear, and discouraging. Thus, students as writers require clear input, suggestion, and critics to develop their writing ability.

The finding is similar to the previous study which found that teacher’s indirect written feedback has advantages and disadvantages. However, the advantages and disadvantages uttered by students in Banu (2011) were a little bit different from my study. In the previous study, students uttered that the advantages of indirect written feedback were effective, helpful, and could train students to do the revision, while in my study, students said that the advantages of teacher’s indirect written feedback were it was helpful and challenging. Furthermore, in the previous study, some students mentioned that the disadvantages of teacher’s indirect written feedback were not clear and hard to be understood, whereas in my study, students uttered that the disadvantages of teacher’s indirect written feedback were it was confusing and not effective.

**Students’ Strategies to Deal with Teacher’s Indirect Written Feedback**

In writing, the problems faced by students to deal with teacher’s indirect written feedback encourage them to find the way out. Some participants that were interviewed mentioned that the first strategy to deal with teacher’s indirect written
feedback was trying to observe and guess by themselves in which part they made mistakes in their writing.

My first strategy is observing what is meant by the teacher. I always contemplate and take a look at my text, try to think again about the right grammar and how to write better. Then I tried to open the dictionary, oh this is not appropriate! This is a noun, not a verb. Besides, I tried to learn from basic grammar text to know the appropriate vocabularies. (S5, April, 1st 2015)

The first thing that I did was trying to guess what is the right one, how to do the correction which is more appropriate. If I could not do that I will ask to my friends or teacher. (S6, April, 1st 2015)

Usually, I directly opened the notes from the teacher. Luckily, I still have the note, so I can take a look again before started revision process… Then I start to revise it. (S7, April, 1st 2015)

From the opinions above, it shows that the students have their own strategy and an opportunity to develop themselves in order to deal with teacher’s indirect written feedback such as observed what is meant by teacher, tried to guess the right one, and directly opened the notes from teacher.

Besides, most participants that were interviewed mentioned that asking their teacher were also their strategies when dealing with the teacher’s indirect written feedback.

… I prefer to ask to the teacher rather than to my friends because they do not know the meaning of the symbols or the right one. (S1, March, 31st 2015)

If for example I do not know the teacher’s indirect written feedback I usually ask directly to teacher what the meaning of the symbols are… (S2, March, 31st 2015)

My strategy is asking for explanation from teacher, and then I revise my writing by myself and ask the revision or suggestion from people who are experienced in English. (S8, April, 8th 2015)

From the quotations above, the students actually wanted to get better understanding about indirect written feedback after asking the meaning of the
symbols directly to the teacher because they thought that the one who certainly knew the meaning was the teacher her/himself. After they knew the meaning of the symbols given, it would help them to revise their writing more easily.

Meanwhile, one of the students uttered that his strategy to deal with teacher’s in indirect written feedback was try to guess even though he felt some doubts.

… Well, my strategy is I tried to guess but I still feel doubt. I did not think to browse also. (S10, April, 8th 2015)

From the quotations above, it can be seen that the students basically still had problems related to the teacher’s indirect written feedback. They still had to find out the answer from different sources to overcome their problems. Guessing and opening the dictionary and grammar books were done by a few of them. Moreover, the students as writers still needed teacher’s help to overcome their problems when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback. Most of them even directly asked the teacher the meaning of the symbols given. Ferris (2003) asserted that teachers as facilitators should really notice students’ competency of knowledge particularly in providing indirect written feedback. That is why teacher should think of and do practical ways to help students comprehend the symbols given so that the feedback can in turn help them revise their writing.

The finding is similar to the previous study’s finding (Banu, 2011) that students have some strategies to deal with teacher’s indirect written feedback such as guessing in which part they made mistakes in their writing, and asking to the teacher directly.
Students’ Suggestions in Improving the Application of Teacher’s Indirect Written Feedback and Improving Their Writing Ability

Not only uttered the strategies to deal with teacher’s indirect written feedback, but in this study, 6 out of 12 participants expressed that they wanted clear explanation about the symbols given in order to make them get more understanding about the symbols given by teacher.

… It is better for the teacher to explain about the symbols after giving the feedback. So we, students, are easier to know the meaning of the symbols given… (S3, March, 31st 2015)

… I think teacher should give explanation about the meaning or purpose of the symbols given. Why the choice of words is wrong. Sometimes, we did not know the meaning for some symbols but teacher thought that we have already knew. (S4, March, 31st 2015)

I think at the beginning of the course teacher should give same understanding to students about what indirect written feedback is. Then, teacher explains the meaning of the symbols, so new students will not get confused in answering and interpreting the feedback given by teacher. (S11, April, 9th 2015)

What the students need was they could get the benefits of understanding the symbols in teacher’s indirect written feedback. In this case, students wanted clear explanation from teachers, as the provider of the symbols or the person that corrects students’ mistake. They should really know how to provide written feedback that is suitable and understandable for students, so that students can easily understand the symbols and use them to revise their writing.

As said by Ancker (2000), it is challenging for teachers to boost learners’ ability in writing particularly when giving feedback. On the other hand, learners who practice writing require something clear and not confusing. They needed teacher’s indirect written feedback to be clarified and provided in details. Thus, to
avoid students’ misunderstanding to interpret the feedback itself, it would be better if teachers consider the appropriate ways such as: give the list and clear meaning of the symbols and remind the meaning of the symbols after distributing students’ writing.

Meanwhile, some students want teacher to give such a clue in their feedback. They thought it is okay for teachers to give indirect written feedback, but teachers need to give little note or clue under the feedback given.

In indirect written feedback teacher should give a little note in the feedback that was given… (S1, March, 31st 2015)

I think it is okay for teacher giving feedback, but teacher should give… little clue so that we are easier to interpret the symbols. (S2, March, 31st 2015)

I think it is okay if teacher gave symbols like circle, scratch and underline. But they should give explanation. The word should be replaced with what word, the tenses that used, so there is a little clue to make it easier to revise the writing. (S6, April, 1st 2015)

Besides symbols given in indirect written feedback, teacher should give a little note… (S5, April, 1st 2015)

From the students’ opinion, it seems that they want the teacher to give clue for the symbols given so that they are easier to interpret the symbols in order to make them easier to revise their writing.

Here, the teachers as the providers of the feedback were required to give comprehension or understanding related to indirect written feedback and give clear meaning of the symbols to students. The comprehension in giving feedback by the teacher would be very effective to improve students’ writing skill (Hamp-Lyonz, 2006). Besides, it has the purpose to avoid students from keeping making
mistakes, to teach them to be more independent, and to train students’ self-confidence.

Another opinion shared by S9 and S12 revealed that face to face consultation might be suitable to inform students about their weaknesses and give them solution in the revision process.

Teacher gave indirect written feedback and gave the symbols directly or face to face to students, so that students can understand what the meaning of the symbols and which part should be revised. (S9, April, 8th 2015)

… I was really helped with the face to face counseling, I can say to the teacher about my weaknesses in writing. I mean I was confused with this symbol... and how it should be… (S12, April, 9th 2015)

From the quotations above, it can be inferred that the students understanding about teacher’s indirect written feedback and their improvement in writing can be achieved if they are helped through face to face consultation. This idea is strengthen by Williams (2002) affirms that feedback delivered through dialogue between teacher and student can be used by student writer to develop both a text and his or writing abilities. Through face to face consultation, students will feel more comfortable to express their weaknesses in the process of writing. That is why face to face consultation is strongly suggested to be done.

From this section, it can be concluded that students as writers still require other ways to support their understanding about teacher’s indirect written feedback and improve their writing ability. Clear explanation about the symbols given, a short clue in their feedback, and face to face consultation will help students revise their writing more easily and automatically will improve students’ writing ability.
The finding is similar to the previous study’s finding (Banu, 2011) that students had some suggestions in improving the application of teacher’s indirect written feedback and improving their writing ability. They wanted the teacher to give clear explanation about the symbols given in order to make them get more understanding about the symbols. They also wanted the teacher to give such a clue in their feedback, and conduct a face-to-face consultation to give them solutions in the revision process.

Differences in Students’ Initial Reaction or Strategy When Receiving Teacher’s Indirect Written Feedback When in Pair Work and Individual Work

In this study, there were different initial reactions from students when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work and individual work. One of the students uttered that she felt more relax when received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work.

My initial reaction when I receiving teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work was felt more relaxes because it could be done together... So when I find the difficulties I can ask the others. (S6, April, 1st 2015)

In pair work, one of the participants uttered that she felt more relax to receive teacher’s indirect written feedback because it could be done together with her friend. She believed when she got the difficulties when working in pair, she could ask and discuss her problem with her friend in group. It was different when she worked individual because she had to guess by herself.
Besides, the other participants uttered that she felt more helpful when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work.

Honestly I feel more helpful when received teacher’s indirect written feedback when doing a pair work… I can compare our each opinion to make the sentence in writing stronger and more interesting. So I will not be dizzy anymore because my friend can help me and we can combine our opinions. (S2, March, 31st 2015)

The student uttered that she felt more helpful when received teacher’s indirect written feedback when in pair work because she could compare and combine her opinion with her friend’s opinion so that her writing become more interesting.

Another participant also uttered that she felt more comfortable when received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work.

I felt more comfortable when I received teacher’s indirect written feedback when in pair work… I could share and mix the opinions to make a good writing. (S12, April, 9th 2015)

Here, the student felt more comfortable when she received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work. Almost the same as the previous reasons, sharing and mixing her opinion with her friend in a group toward indirect written feedback given by teacher really helped her to produce a good writing.

However, one of the students uttered that he felt confused when he received teacher’s indirect written feedback in an individual work rather than in a pair work.

When received teacher’s indirect written feedback in an individual for the first time I felt confused… In a pair work, I felt more helpful because I could ask my friend in my group when I found the difficulties. (S4, March, 31st 2015)
From the quotation above, he uttered that he felt confused to receive teacher’s indirect written feedback when work individually for the first time. He had to think by himself when he found the difficulties. It is different when he worked in pair since his friend would help him to fix the problems and discuss it together. That is why he felt more helpful when received teacher’s indirect written feedback in a pair work.

Besides that, students also uttered that they had different strategy when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work and individual work.

The strategy when I received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work was I discussed with my friend. If we still did not know, then we asked other friends. In an individual work, as I said before, my strategy was trying to guess. (S6, April, 1st 2015)

Directly discussing the problem with her friend was student’s strategy when she received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work. She thought that through discussing it with her friend, it would help her to solve the problem. Asking the other friends was also her strategy when she still could not find the answer when she received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work. Moreover, she uttered that her strategy when she received teacher’s indirect written feedback in individual work was trying to guess. Because in individual work she worked individually, then she needed to think her problem alone before asking to other friends.

Furthermore, the other strategy uttered by student was dividing the tasks.

In pair work the strategy was dividing the tasks. My friend tried to find out the mistakes and I tried to arrange the sentences. When we were dividing the tasks, then it would save the time. In individual
work I need to think by myself. It was different in pair work because we could discuss it together. (S7, April, 1st 2015)

Dividing the tasks was the other student strategy when he received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pairs. By dividing his task with his friend, it would help him to do the writing faster. When he tried to divide the task, it did not mean that he worked alone. He still discussed it first and divided the tasks so that he could finish faster.

From this section, it can be seen that students had different initial reactions when received teacher’s indirect written feedback whether it was in pair work or individual work. Some students uttered that they felt more relaxed, more helped, and more comfortable when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work because they could discuss it with their friend. Whereas in individual work one of students uttered that he felt confused when he received teacher’s indirect written feedback. It was because he had to think by himself when he found the difficulty upon receiving teacher’s indirect written feedback in individual work for the first time.

Not only that, students also uttered that they had different strategies when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback whether it was in pair work or individual work. Their strategies when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work were they directly discussed and divided the tasks with their friends, whereas in individual work they just tried to guess by themselves and probably later asked other friends or teacher.

This section was actually the additional information that I asked to the students based on the 6th interview question. The finding revealed that students
felt more relaxed, more helped, and more comfortable when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work because they could discuss it with their friend.
CONCLUSION

This study is aimed to find out students’ attitude toward teacher’s indirect written feedback in Procedural Writing course. The finding revealed that teacher’s indirect written feedback was considered important and helpful in the eye of most students. It gave them way to do correction in writing so that they could improve their writing. It also gave the opportunity for students to build their confidence through self correction. Furthermore, students had different initial reactions related to the application of teacher’s indirect written feedback. They felt confused, shocked, and ordinary when they received indirect written feedback given by teacher. The different meaning of the symbols in the teacher’s indirect written feedback made some students feel confused, but they still thought that it was a part of the learning process.

Besides, students also had different initial reactions when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work and in individual work. Some students uttered that they felt more relaxed, more helped, and more comfortable when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback in pair work because they could discuss it with their friend. Sharing and discussing the opinions with their friends in a group helped students when they received teacher’s indirect written feedback. In contrast, in individual work, one of the students uttered that he felt confused and found the difficulty when he received teacher’s indirect written feedback for the first time.

As for the strategies to deal with teacher’s indirect written feedback, students did guessing, directly opening the grammar book, and even directly
asking to the teacher on the meaning of the symbols. Concerning about this, students suggest that teacher should give clear explanation about the symbols given, give such a clue in their feedback, and conduct face to face consultation to improve the application of teacher’s indirect written feedback and their writing ability.

Based on the findings of the study, teachers may find the most effective way to correct students’ mistakes in writing, so that students can utilize the indirect written feedback given by teacher well and improve their writing. For instance, maybe it would be better if teachers provide indirect written feedback when students work in pairs first before providing it for students in individual assignments.

This study is not without limitations. First, this study only involved 12 participants in total from 3 out of 6 classes of the Procedural Writing course. Second, this study only used one instrument that is interview questions. That is why the result cannot be generalized. Thus, for further research, I suggest that the next researcher can conduct similar research with more participants using a questionnaire and interview questions.
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APPENDIX

The interview questions used in collecting the data for this thesis accomplishment

1. What is your opinion toward teacher indirect written feedback in general?
2. What was your initial reaction when you received indirect written feedback on your draft?
3. What is your opinion toward indirect written feedback?
4. What strategies did you use to deal with indirect written feedback if you did not understand the feedback?
5. What do you want your teacher to do when giving indirect written feedback to make you understand to revise your draft and to improve your writing ability?
6. Is there any difference in initial reaction or strategy when you received teacher’s indirect written feedback when in pair work and individual work?