

# THE 2009 UAD National Conference

## CREATIVE TEACHING AS SOLUTION TO PROBLEM IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH

**YOGYAKARTA, JULY 25-26, 2009**



AHMAD DAHLAN UNIVERSITY  
JLN. PRAMUKA 42 YOGYAKARTA, 55161, TELP.:0274 371120



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## THE SPEECH OF THE RECTOR OF UAD

*Assalamualaikum wr.wb.*

*Honorable guests and participants.*

First of all let us thank Allah, the Almighty for blessing, guiding us into right path, and granting us with a good condition and an opportunity to succeed our national English learning and teaching conference held by Ahmad Dahlan University of Yogyakarta.

Learning another language, such as English, which is one of Germanic languages, means bilingualism. When learning a language, the learners' what I call 'cultural capacity', will effect beyond our first language confine and insert a new language, a new culture, new way of thinking, feeling, an acting. In another way, I could say that it is long and complex, but we have to struggle for it successfully.

Teaching language also means learning how one masters the language, in which we, teachers, lectures, should be aware of any factors that influence. Considering teaching process, we could understand how and why one learns or gets failure to learn a second language. Therefore, understanding the principles of foreign language learning and teaching is paramount.

Starting teaching resembles to begin where we, teachers and lecturers, should ask for some questions concerning with learning and teaching process. To consider the learners' capacities, we may apply *who, what, how, when, where* and *why* questions suggested by Brown (1994:2-3). Who refers learners' and teachers' backgrounds, where they are from, what their intellectual capacities are, education levels, socioeconomic level. This question focuses on variables that influence both learners' success in acquiring a foreign language and the teachers' capacity to enable the learners to achieve language mastery.

The next question importantly considered is *what*. This quiz probes the nature of the language being learned, for an example, what language is. It is of course a central to linguistics. The next is how learning takes place. This question deals with how one ensures success in language languages, for an instance what cognitive processes involved in foreign language learning. Other three questions are *when, where* and *why*. *When* is closely related to the issue of differential success of children and adults in language learning. It centers on the amount of time spent in the capacity of leaning

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why is the most encompassing quiz in regard to learners' success of learning language. Accordingly language mastery is like a process of puzzle solving where teachers and learners are to discover the pieces, and then fit them together. This puzzle game need to be coherent and unified in a creative manner. The fore mentioned lines indicate how creativity and innovation will work for solution in teaching and learning. Accordingly, this conference on a theme "*Creative Teaching as Solution to Problems in Teaching and Learning English*" is of course meaningful and beneficial.

As a final word, may I wish you a successful conference.

***Wassalamu'alaikum wr, wb***

Yogyakarta, July 23, 2009

Drs. Kasiyarno, M.Hum.  
Rector of UAD

## THE SPEECH OF THE COMMITTEE

Assalamu'alalaikum wr,wb

First of all, let's thank *Allah SWT*, the God, the most Gracious, the Most merciful. *Sholawat* and *salam* may *Allah* give to the greatest prophet Muhammad SAW.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to welcome you all to this UAD TEFL Conference under the core theme: "*Creative Teaching as Solution to Problems in Teaching and Learning English*".

As the chairman of the committee let me give you a report on this conference. This conference has 5 plenary sessions and 4 parallel sessions. It is attended by more than 200 participants from Makassar, Ponorogo, Jakarta, Bandung, Bangka-Belitung, Semarang, Cilacap, Kebumen, Yogyakarta and other cities in Indonesia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to express my deep gratitude to those who have made this conference possible. My thanks go to the rector of University of Ahmad Dahlan, the Dean of Teacher Training and Education, and Head of English Education Study Program for their support. I would also like to thank the keynote speakers: Prof. Dr. H. A Chaedar Al-Wasilah from UPJ Bandung, Prof. Dr. Abdul Rasheed Muhammed (University Sains Malaysia), Prof. Dr. Bustami Subhan, M.S. ( University of Ahmad Dahlan), Mrs. Rum Hera Ria (British Council Jakarta), and Mr. Indra Charismiadji (Higher Learning, Jakarta) for saying yes to our invitation to the seminar. Next, my thanks also go to all presenters and participants of this conference and to all sponsors: The US Embassy, British Council, TOEIC, Higher Learning, and Republika.

I hope this conference can be one of the ways to provide a wider horizon to develop creative teaching as a solution to problems of teaching and learning English.

Thank You

Wassalamu'alaikum wr, wb

Yogyakarta, July 23, 2009

R. Muhammad Ali, S.S  
Conference Chairman

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**V** *Creative Teaching as Solution to Problems in TLE*

## HOW DO ENGLISH TEACHERS OR LECTURERS GIVE FEEDBACK ON LEARNERS' WRITING?

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### ABSTRACT

*In English language teaching and learning, language learners often violate the language rules when they are involved in language production. For example, when they engage in writing, they make language deviations that can be classified into two categories, namely competence and performance deviations. Such language deviations should be seriously taken into account by English teachers or lecturers otherwise they reach to the stage of fossilization.*

*To deal with language deviations, some experts have controversial issues on error treatment arguing whether the error treatment called feedback assists English language learners to improve the accuracy of their writing (Truscott, 1999; Ferris, 1999). Truscott (1999) urges that error correction should be abandoned as it is not only ineffective to deal with the language accuracy but also harmful in learner language development. Kepner (1991) also states that teacher written error correction is not an effective way to the improvement of English writing. In short, error correction has little or no effects on learner writing development. Ferris (1999), however, rebuts such claims by stating that it seems to be misleading to ignore error treatment. According to him, error treatment is an effective way to improve language accuracy. In support of such a claim, Hyland (2003) states that feedback focusing on form facilitates learners to conduct their immediate revisions on learner draft writing. Chandler (2003) also shows that feedback on grammatical and lexical errors which is provided by English teachers results in the improvement of learner language accuracy and fluency on writing.*

*With regard to the above controversy, the writer believes that error treatment has positive impacts on developing learner language production, writing accuracy in particular. Therefore, error treatment should be promoted to English language teachers and lecturers as it confers some advantages. In relation to this issue, this paper deals with error treatment on writing focusing on identification of learner errors according to their type and reviewing the pattern of appropriate feedback applied to improve learner writing ability. The outline of this paper embodies the*



*discussion of the notion of errors, the nature of errors on writing, and types of error treatment, followed by experiment studies which are conducted by some experts. To end up the discussion, some conclusions are made.*

**Keywords:** *Language production, Error treatment, Direct Feedback, Indirect feedback*

### **Introduction**

In English language teaching and learning, there are four basic language skills targeted to deal with language development. The language skills include listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Harmer (1991, 2003) classifies the language skills into two, namely receptive language skills and productive language skills. Listening and reading are categorized as receptive language skills as both are concerned with receiving messages. On the other hand, speaking and writing are called productive language skills on the ground that they involve language production. Added to the four language skills, language development also deals with linguistic components which embody some aspects of language such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, orthography, spelling and others. These linguistic components are embedded in the four language skills.

Of the four language skills, writing is believed to be the most difficult language skill as it involves communicating messages in a written form with the employment of linguistic components which include grammar, vocabulary, spelling, orthography, and punctuation. Very often, English language learners find difficulties to communicate their message in a written form with the accurate and appropriate forms of language which are rendered into a text. In this case, a writer should work hard to select the appropriate words to be used to form sentences with the employment of cohesive devices to minimize misinterpretation on the part of readers. Greenslade and Felix-Brasdefer (2006) state that writing in second language is a complex issue as a writer should master elements of contents, style, the way of the organization of ideas, and surface elements of writing such as grammar, vocabulary, and the actual mechanics of writing. Added to this, the writer should avoid ambiguous sentences and consider the lexical density as the nature of written communication. In short, writing requires comprehensive understanding of the language rule or linguistic competence, lexis, the topics being written, and knowledge of punctuation.

In relation to writing process, English language learners very often make errors. Corder in Ellis (2003) divides errors into two types, namely an overt error and covert error. The former deals with an error which is easy to identify as it performs a clear deviation in form, for example, *\*I runned all the way*. On the other hand, a covert error means an error which is seemingly well-formed but it does not mean what the learner intends them to mean, for example, *\*she is a soft-land girl*. Burt in Ellis (2003) proposes a

global error and local error. A global error is a language deviation that affects overall sentence organization due to wrong word order, missing or wrongly placed cohesive devices, and syntactic overgeneralization. A local error, on the other hand, is defined as an error that affects single element in a sentence, for example, errors in morphology or grammatical functors. A local error is also concerned with mis-spelling and orthography. Such errors do not hamper readers' understanding of the forms.

To deal with language deviations, some experts have controversial issues on error treatment arguing whether the error treatment called feedback assists English language learners to improve the accuracy of their writing (Truscott, 1999; Ferris, 1999). Truscott (1999) urges that error correction should be abandoned as it is not only ineffective to deal with the language accuracy but also harmful in learner language development. Kepner (1991) also states that teacher written error correction is not an effective way to the improvement of English writing. In short, error correction has little or no effects on learner writing development. Ferris (1999), however, rebuts such claims by stating that it seems to be misleading to ignore error treatment. According to him, error treatment is an effective way to improve language accuracy. In support of such a claim, Hyland (2003) states that feedback focusing on form facilitates learners to conduct their immediate revisions on learner draft writing. Chandler (2003) also shows that feedback on grammatical and lexical errors which is provided by English teachers results in the improvement of learner language accuracy and fluency on writing.

With regard to the importance of error feedback, this paper attempts to review how English teachers or lecturers handle the errors made by English language learners when they are involved in writing. The outline of this paper embodies a discussion of the notion of errors, nature of errors on writing, source of errors, and types of error treatment, followed by experiment studies on error feedback which are conducted by some experts. To end up the discussion, some conclusions are made.

#### **The Notion of Errors**

Before having a further discussion on error treatment, the term *error* needs to be well defined. Such a limitation is of great use for minimizing different views of error. Coder in Ellis (2003) distinguishes between an error and a mistake. According to him, an error refers to a language deviation due to lack of knowledge of language rules of the target language. It represents a lack of competence. Added to this, an error can be defined as a violation of the language rules, resulting in an unacceptable utterance or sentence because the learners have not yet internalized the formation rules of the target language. Mistake, on the other hand, deals with performance phenomena as a result of competing plans, memory limitations, and lack of automaticity. A mistake or lapse is the result of some failure of performance. It occurs when the language user (who might be a native speaker) makes a slip such as a false start or a confusion of

structure. A Mistake is seen as the result of inappropriate usage of language. Another criterion to distinguish between an error and a mistake is the process of the learner corrects the language deficiency. When the language deficiency cannot be self-corrected, it is called an error. On the other hand, when the language deficiency can be self-corrected, it is called a mistake. The following presents the different between error and mistake.

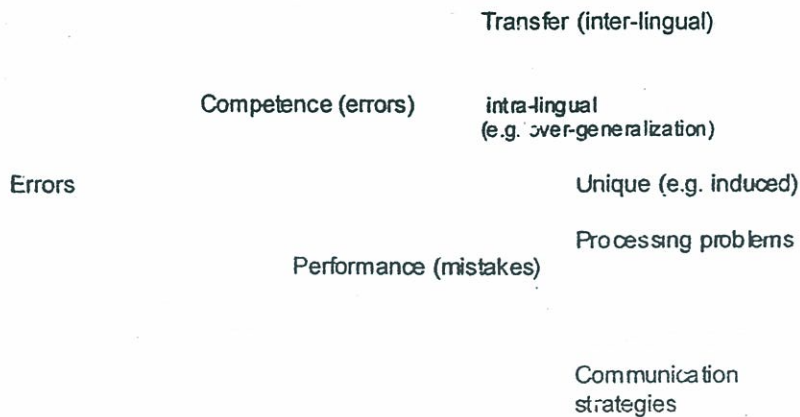


Figure 1 Types of English Language Deviation

Figure 1 performs two types of English language deficiency, namely competence and performance English language errors. The competence errors mean violating the rules of English language as the results of negative transfer from the first language to the target language called inter-lingual, of overgeneralization of the rules of the target language, and the process of inducing the target language when they are involved in communication with other people. The performance errors called mistakes are generated from the processing problems and communicative strategies. However, it is not easy to differentiate the notion of an error and a mistake. They are to some extent interchangeably in practice. This paper uses *error* to refer to any English language deviations made by English learners when they are involved in writing.

#### The Nature of Errors

In terms of error types, some experts have been struggling hard to categorize the errors according to some different perspectives. For example, Dulay, Burt and Krashen in Ellis (2003) propose surface strategy taxonomy. According to them, errors can be divided into four types which include (1) omissions, (2) additions, (3) mis-formations, and (4) mis-ordering. Omissions refer to the absence of language items that must exist in well-formed constructions. Additions mean the presence of language

items that must not emerge in well-formed constructions. Mis-formations are defined as the employment of the wrong forms of language items which are commonly called the language deficiency of words. Mis-orderings refer to the incorrect arrangement of language items in language production. The following table presents examples of each category.

No.	Types of Errors	Examples	Descriptions
01.	Omissions	<p>(1) The texts of (a) caricature in <i>The Jakarta Post</i> (are) considered as spoken discourse since they are syntactically unstructured.</p> <p>(2) Considering the linguistic features, spoken discourse is less structured in term (terms) of syntax.</p> <p>(3) Hornby 91995:706) explain (s) that (a) magazine is a type of (a) large thin book with a paper cover.</p>	<p>The learner omits an article <i>a</i> and a finite verb <i>to be</i> (are)</p> <p>The learner omits <i>s</i> in the language item of <i>term</i>.</p> <p>The learner omits some language items on his construction, namely <i>-s</i>, and determiners.</p>
02.	Additions	<p>(4) Considering the linguistic features, spoken discourse is less structured in term (terms) of syntax.</p> <p>(5) It also concerns <i>with</i> (o) the speaker's problem.</p> <p>(6) This chapter discusses <i>about</i> (o) three issues, conclusions, implications, and suggestions.</p>	<p>The learner omits an article <i>a</i> and a finite verb <i>to be</i> (are)</p> <p>The learner adds a preposition <i>with</i> which must not appear on the construction.</p> <p>The learner adds a preposition <i>about</i> which must not appear on the construction.</p>

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03.	Mis-formation	(7) Into (In) the first section, the research (researcher) provides research findings showing the frequencies of the occurrence of speech acts.	The learner has mis-formation of the word <i>into</i> and <i>research</i> .
		(8) The reader must share the similar spatio-temporal context to engage for (in) them. (9) As we know <i>that (o)</i> English is very important to be learnt.	The language item of <i>for</i> must be <i>in</i> . The language item of <i>that</i> must be omitted.
04.	Mis-ordering	(10) The teacher and the students do not have <i>learning materials proper</i> . (11) The two major components are <i>characteristics students and needs students</i> .	The italicized form is the example mis-ordering. It must be <i>proper learning materials</i> . The italicized form is the example mis-ordering. It must be <i>student characteristics and student needs</i> or <i>students' characteristics and needs</i> .

Table 1 The Examples of Errors according to the surface strategy taxonomy

Other categorization of errors is conducted by Corder in Ellis (2003). He offers three types of error according to the systematicity of error. They are (1) pre-systematic errors, (2) systematic errors, and (3) post-systematic errors. The first type of error refers to a condition when the learners are not aware of the appearance of a particular rule in the target language. The second type emerges when the learners have found a rule but it is the wrong one. The last type occurs when learners know the correct target language rule but they employ the rule inconsistently. To identify such types of error, English teachers or lecturers have to conduct an interview with learners to explain their behaviours of making errors. Of course, it requires much energy and time to do so.

In terms of the source of error, Richards in Ellis (2003) documents three types of error which include (1) interference errors, (2) intra-lingual

errors, and (3) developmental errors. In reference to the first source, errors which are made by learners are generated from the influence of the learners' first language. Such errors occur because of the negative transfer from learners' first language to the target language. In this case, learners activate the rule of the first language when they deal with language production on the target language. Intra-lingual errors occur when learners make faulty generalization, deal with incomplete application of rules, and perform the failure to learn conditions under which the rules are applied. The developmental errors emerge when learners endeavor to construct hypotheses about the target language because of limited knowledge of language.

In relation to the interference errors, Lott in Ellis (2003) further subdivides them into three, namely (1) overextension, (2) transfer of structure, and (3) inter-lingual/intra-lingual errors. Over-extension emerges when the learner misuses a language item because his/her first language shares linguistics features with the target language. The transfer of structure occurs when learner employs an L1 structure rather than of the target language structure. The Inter-lingual/intra-lingual errors arise when a particular distinction does not emerge in the L1.

According to Richards in Ellis (2003), the intra-lingual errors are also further subdivided into four types, namely (1) overgeneralization, (2) ignorance of rule restrictions, (3) incomplete application, and (4) false concepts hypothesized. The first type arises when the learners construct a deviance of a structure which refers to other structures in the target language (for example, \*He can *writes* good summaries). The second type occurs when the learners apply the rules that violet the well-formed rules (for example, \*The English teachers let students *to do* the exercise in groups). The third type emerges when the learners fail to fully develop a structure of the target language (for example, \*You *like* to write?, instead of 'Do you like to sing?') The last type happens when the learners fail to comprehended a distinction in the target language (for example, \*It was *happened many times*, instead of *It happened many times*).

With regard to the above types of errors, English teachers or lecturers can identify the most frequent errors that their learners make, give serious attention on them and find the appropriate error treatment on them. Otherwise, such errors made by their learners are potential to cause fossilization on the part of the learners. According to Myles and Mitchell in Candlin and Mercer (2004: 20), the term *fossilization* refers to a stage in which target language learners come to the freezing stage of a language deviance. Selinker in Ellis (2003) states that fossilization occurs in most language learners and it cannot be remedied by further instruction. This endangers for learners of English as it cannot be further treated. For such a reason, error treatments should be promoted for English teachers or lecturers to prevent the stage of fossilization.

## **Error treatments**

There are some issues discussed in the part which include the notion of feedback, types of feedback, and the experiment studies on error feedback. Each is presented below.

### **1. The definition of Error treatments**

A number of terms have been proposed to refer to the general area of error treatment. Ellis (2003) mentions feedback, repair, and correction. The term *feedback* is a general cover term for the information given by listeners or readers on the reception and comprehension of messages. Vigil and Oller in Ellis (2003) distinguish two types of feedback, namely cognitive feedback and affective feedback. The former type deals with actual understanding of the language production, while the latter type is concerned with motivational supports. The term *repair* is defined as an attempt to identify and remedy language production used in communication, including those that result from linguistic errors. Correction refers to an attempt to supply negative evidence in the form of feedback which emphasizes the errors made by L2 learners. Chaudron in Ellis (2003) proposes *treatment* which can be divided into four types namely (1) treatment that establishes autonomous ability to correct themselves on deviant items, (2) treatment that results in the elicitation of a correct reaction from a learner, (3) any response by the teacher that clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to or demands improvement, and (4) positive or negative reinforcement involving expressions of appreciation or condemnation. In this paper, three terms *correction*, *feedback* and *treatment* are interchangeably applied as they have the same essence, namely an attempt provided by English teachers or peers to deal with errors.

### **2. The importance of error treatment**

Error treatment tends to be one of the prominent and sensitive issues in English language teaching particularly in dealing with a language production (speaking and writing). Liu (2008), for example, states that error treatment is one of the key issues in second language writing. However, some experts question whether the error feedback in writing assists students to improve the accuracy and overall quality of their writing (Kepner, 1991; Truscott, 1999; and Ferris, 1999). According to Truscott (1996, 1999, 2007), all forms of error correction of L2 student writing are believed to be ineffective and harmful for student language and psychological developments. Krashen in Ellis (2003: 584) warns that correction is 'useless for acquisition and dangerous in which it may lead to a negative affective response'. This statement is supported by Kepner's experiment research findings with the use of two types of written feedback, namely message-related comments and surface error correction. According to his research findings, the regular use of L2 teachers' written error-corrections as the main medium of written feedback was useless in L2 writing as surface error-corrections only occurred at the sentence level which did not lead to the



improvement of the content of student writing. In contrast, the use of message-related comments was effective for promoting both overall quality and surface-level accuracy. Therefore, the error correction on form must be eradicated in the process of English teaching and learning. In addition, although most English learners are strongly eager to ask grammar correction, the English teachers or lecturers should not provide them with grammar correction.

Ferris (1999) rebuts such a claim as error treatment somehow plays an important role to develop well-formed English language features and learner language production. It seems misleading to say that error correction is ineffective in improving the accuracy of student writing in the long terms for learners of all levels (Hyland, 2003 and Bitchener, 2008). Also, English teachers or lecturers should not dismiss students' strong desire for error feedback. A number of studies on error correction in L2 writing classes reveal that students receiving error feedback from their teachers can improve in their writing accuracy (Hyland, 2003; Chandler, 2003). According to Hyland (2003), feedback which gives an emphasis on form was utilized by the students in their direct revisions to their drafts and was highly respected by them. Chandler (2003) conducted an experiment study on error feedback involving experimental and control groups. The research findings state that error feedback on students' grammatical and lexical errors confer a significant improvement in both accuracy and fluency in subsequent writing. Such findings disproves Truscott's (1999) claim on the negative effect of error correction on fluency.

As far as the writer concerns, the error feedback is of great importance in student language production, writing in particular as it can be used as one of the ways to prevent fossilization. Added to this, the error feedback can be used to remedy the inter-language or developmental errors when the learners engage in language production to obtain well-formed English constructions on student writing. In support of this, the corrective feedback conducted by L2 teachers enables learners to notice the gap between their inter-language forms and target language forms (Schmidt and Frota, 1986) and the learner cognitive comparison may trigger a destabilization and restructuring of the target language grammar (Ellis, 2003; Gass, 1997). In addition, Corrective feedback leads to the enhancement of learners' meta-linguistic awareness. Further, Allwright in Panova and Lyster (2002: 574) teacher feedback can be used to seek out information about the effectiveness of the process of English teaching and learning and ultimately knowledge about the language learning takes place. In shorts, corrective feedback is beneficial in nature.

### 3. The types of feedback

In terms of the types of feedback, some experts identify them according to their own perspectives. Kepner (1991) identifies the types of feedback into two, namely message-related comments and surface error-corrections. The former deals with focusing on the content of student

writing, while the latter is more concerned with linguistic forms. According to Kepner's study (1999), message-related comments are beneficial for students to improve the content of student writing. On the other hand, surface error corrections do not perform significant roles in L2 writing for higher-proficiency or lower proficiency learners.

Mi-mi (2009) proposes four types of error feedback. They include (1) teacher written feedback, (2) peer feedback, (3) self-monitoring and teacher-student conference, and (4) computer-mediated feedback. Teacher written feedback deals with reviewing on students' writing word by word and correcting every single error in students' writing. That is why such a type of error feedback is really time-consuming and requires intensive work. Peer feedback often has the same concept as peer response, peer editing, and peer review. It is defined as conducting error feedback among students in the class. In this case, teachers ask students to edit, to review, and to revise students' writing recursively. Cognitively, peer feedback encourages students to train their thinking and to establish their language awareness. Linguistically, peer feedback can provide students with valuable opportunities to improve their reading and writing ability to deal with some issues such as writing contents, organizational patterns, grammatical structures and appropriate word selection. Affectively, peer correction enhances students' confidence and reduces apprehension by taking a look at peers' strengths and weaknesses in writing. This can generate students' positive attitude toward writing. Some negative comments arise for the peer correction as students tend to be having no sufficient knowledgeable skills to detect and correct their friends' errors. To figure out this problem, English teachers are promoted to create conducive environments for students to set up peer trust and to hand out purposeful and suitable peer feedback sheets (Hansen, 2005). In addition, English teachers should select different modes of peer feedback to specific condition which include written feedback (read the papers and write comments to give back to the writer), oral feedback (students read the paper and orally give the suggestions), and written plus oral (write comments and orally discuss it with the writer).

The next type is self-monitoring and teacher-student conference. According to Cresswell (2000), self-monitoring means that students write marginal annotations about problems in their evolving writing. Self-monitoring fosters students to look at their writing work critically and analytically and to establish their learning autonomy. Wang (2004) states that self-monitoring is an effective way for students to improve the structure of their writing. However, it is not easy to apply self-monitoring feedback because some self-monitoring learners cannot adequately describe their concerns. They very often find difficulties to locate the errors in their writing. Many students still rely on the teachers rather than exercise their own judgments. To figure out the problem, English teachers should set up teacher-student conference after self-monitoring is conducted.

The other type of error feedback is computer-mediated feedback. This utilizes a computer to run computer conferencing. According to Hyland,

et al. (2006), there are two ways of conducting computer-mediated feedback, namely synchronous writing (students conduct a communication with each other or the teacher in real time via internet chat sites) and asynchronous writing (the students communicate in a delayed way such as via email). The computer-mediated communication drives students to get a more active role when they seek feedback for they can ask questions when they want to and take the initiative in discussions (Warschauer, 1997). Computer-mediated feedback confers a significant benefit as the comments are automatically stored by later retrieval that allows teachers to print out the transcript for in class discussion. However, it is realized that computer-mediated feedback is relatively new and becomes controversial issue as it is somewhat hard to be applied in practice. It depends on the availability of the facilities owned by the schools concerned and teachers' time.

Different to the above categorization, Ferris (2002) proposes two types of feedback, namely direct feedback and indirect feedback (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Chandler, 2003; Bitchener et al., 2005; Bitchener, 2008; Liu, 2008). Ferris (2002: 19) states that direct feedback refers to one when a teacher gives direct feedback of the correct linguistic forms (word, morpheme, phrases, rewritten sentences, deleted words, or omitted morphemes) for students. The direct feedback promotes teachers to provide corrections of any errors made by learners. Indirect feedback, on the other hand, is defined as the teacher's correction by underlining or coding (or giving error descriptions) to mark the errors and leaving the errors to the student writers to correct their errors by themselves. In this case, teachers only mark (underlining or coding) the errors made by the learners and ask them to remedy or correct their own errors. According to Ferris (1999), during commenting on students' writing work, teachers directly correct the major word-order or word choice problems, which students cannot find and underline the grammar, spelling, or mechanical mistakes which foster students to have self-corrections.

#### 4. The Experiment research on direct feedback and indirect feedback.

In relation to the direct and indirect feedback in L2 writing, a number of studies on it have been conducted by some experts. Ferris and Roberts (2001) conducted research on the comparison of two types of indirect feedback, namely underlining and coding systems. His research findings reveal that both underlining and coding did slightly better in revising student grammatical errors than the one receiving only underlining the feedback. Both groups perform significant improvements on their writing compared to the control group receiving no feedback. Chandler (2003) carried out research on error feedback with the use of four types of feedback, namely (1) direct correction, (2) underlining with description, (3) description only, and (4) underlining only. The results of her study reveal that both direct correction and simple underlining to be more effective than describing the types of error in reducing long-term error. She also found that direction correction performs best for producing accurate revision. No

significant difference between direction correction and underlining of error is found. In terms of student perception of the four types of error feedback, students felt that they learned more from self-correction when errors were only underlined. It is evident that direct correction assists students to revise the errors fast and easily, but it does not facilitate to gain meta-linguistic awareness.

Another study was conducted by Bitchener et al. (2005) who compared two types of feedback groups, namely (1) a combination of direct written feedback and oral conference and (2) direct written feedback only with the control group (no corrective feedback) on the three types of errors (preposition, the past simple tense, and the definite articles). The results of the study reveal that there is a significant effect of the combination of written and oral feedback in the use of the past simple tense and the definite article in new pieces of writing. However, no effect is found in the use of preposition. Such findings are confirmed by Bitchener's recent study on the three types of direct feedback: (1) direct feedback, written and oral meta-linguistic explanation, (2) direct feedback and written meta-linguistic explanation, and (3) direct feedback only. The results of the study reveal that the students who get feedback with the use of type 1 and type 2 perform better accuracy on their writing compared to those who do not receive corrective feedback in the use of indefinite and definite articles.

A current quasi-experimental study on error feedback was also conducted by Liu (2008) who applied two types of error feedback, namely direct feedback and indirect feedback. It aimed to assist students to self-edit their texts across two feedback conditions. The errors made by L2 learners were divided into three, namely morphological errors, syntactic errors, and semantic ones. Morphological errors embody some linguistic feature such as all errors in verb tense or form; plural or possessive endings which are incorrect, omitted or unnecessary; subject-verb agreement errors; and use of article or other determiners which are incorrect, omitted, or unnecessary;. The syntactic errors deal with errors in sentence/clause boundaries, word order, and other ungrammatical sentence constructions. The semantic errors are concerned with errors in word choice; including preposition and pronoun errors; omitted word or phrases; unnecessary words or phrases. The results of the study perform that both types of feedback helped students to do with self-correction on their own texts. Although direct feedback minimized students' errors, it did not improve students' accuracy in their different texts. In other words, direct correction is one of the easiest ways to correct student errors because the correct forms are provided, but students tend to make similar errors when they write different texts. Indirect, on the other hand, facilitated students to reduce more morphological errors and syntactical errors than semantic errors. In addition, indirect correction enabled students to make fewer morphological errors with greater accuracy in a new piece of writing than direct correction did.

In reference to the above explanation, it is evident that error feedback serves significant roles for the improvement of student writing

ability. It implies that English teachers or lecturers have to be concerned about providing their students with appropriate error feedback which include direct feedback, indirect feedback, teacher-written feedback, oral-teacher feedback, and others on the ground that error feedback has a strong influence to the success of student written language production. In addition, English teachers or lecturers should be careful in selecting the appropriate error feedback which meets student English language proficiency, types of students' errors, and other circumstances.

### Conclusion

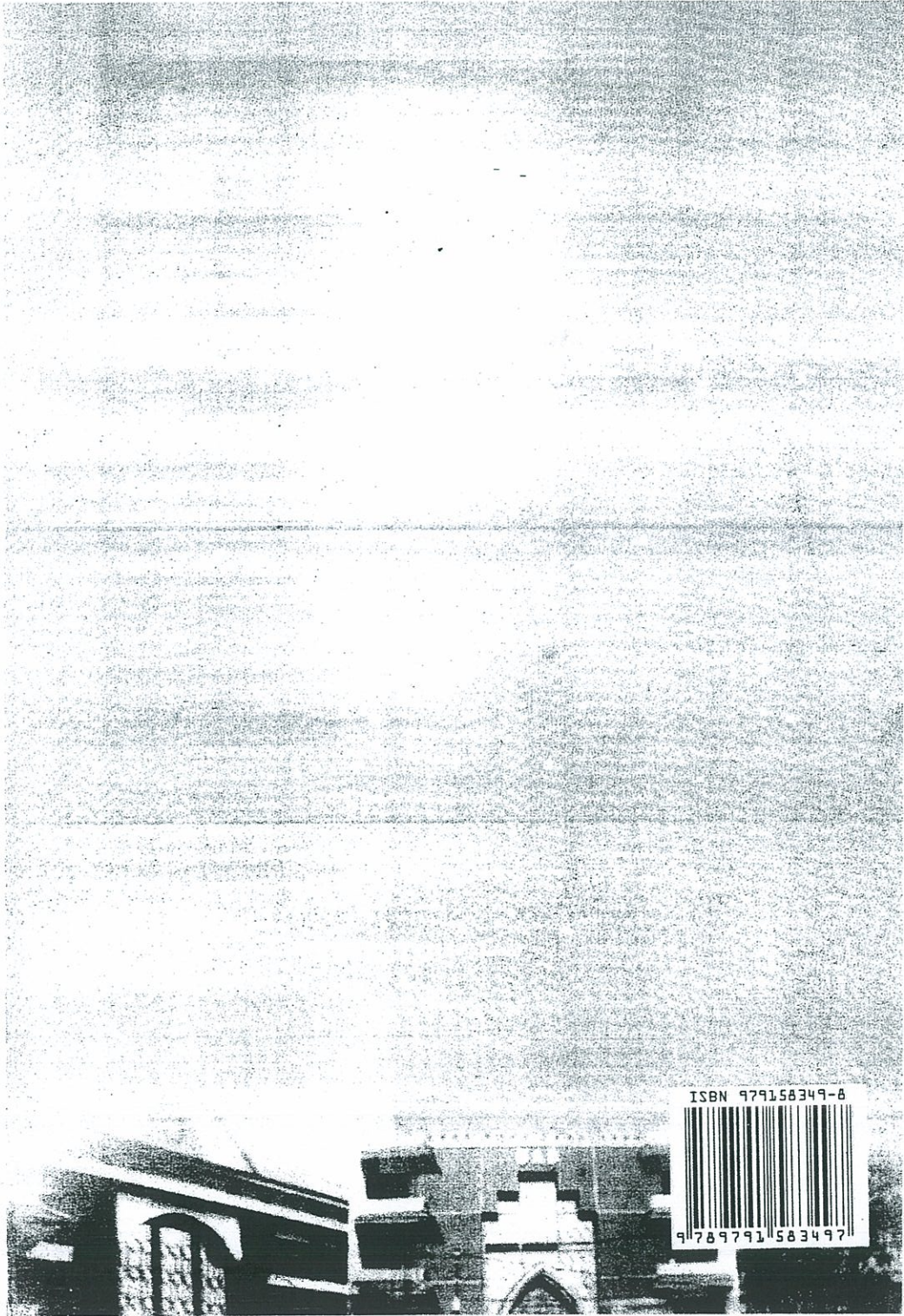
To sum up, error feedback is an essential technique to improve student writing abilities. Teachers, therefore, should implement various feedback strategies with regard to the type of writing assignment, the concrete teaching environment and students' writing proficiency. Teacher direct feedback, indirect feedback, peer feedback, self-monitoring, teacher-student conference are all possible rewarding options for teachers to be used in handling students' errors. With their characteristic properties, they are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary. The proper administering of varied feedback modes are believe to contribute to the productive use of feedback in the writing class and facilitate students' writing improvement in a foreign language.

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