FEEDBACK STRATEGIES TEACHING WRITING ONLINE DURING COVID-19

Abdurahman Hi Usman¹, Abdulhalim Daud,² Suratman Dahlan², Adi F. Mahmud³

¹ Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ternate, Maluku Utara
 ² English Language Education Study Program, FKIP, Universitas Khairun
 ³ Universitas Muhammadiyah Maluku Utara
 Email: abdulhalim.limm@gmail.com;

Abstract

Teaching writing as a process at the university level leads lecturers to give feedback on students' writing drafts. This research aims to investigate the feedback strategies used by the lecturer in giving feedback to students. This is a qualitative case study research designed for several reasons. This study was conducted in a natural setting in which the researcher focus on feedback strategies used by lecturers to respond to students' writing drafts. A purposive sample was used in choosing the subject of this research (Alwasilah, 2012). The instrument of this study were researchers. Researchers act as non-participant of an observer (Djam'an Satory and Aan Komariah, 2010). This study was conducted at Universitas Khairun Ternate. The subjects of this research were fourth-semester students who study essay writing online. Data of this study were obtained from students' documents. Content analysis was focused in this study. The findings in this research were consistent with the ones presented by several scholars in teaching writing. There were several feedback strategies used to respond to students' writing, namely indirect feedback, direct feedback, and commentary feedback to respond to students' writing.

Keywords: Feedback, feedback strategies, writing

INTRODUCTION

Teaching writing is challenging. Writing instructors are trying very hard to help their students to avoid their obstacle. Sometimes, writing instructors do not know where to start to help their students because they found many problems are faced by their students in learning to write. The problems faced by the students are very varied, such as gather ideas, organize them, developed their ideas, and building good sentence structure and grammar.

Writing instructors try to help their students by giving feedback during the online teaching and learning process. Feedback is of ways writing instructors help their students. Giving feedback to students writing drafts should be done. This way is challenging during Coronavirus in 2019 (COVID-19) because this virus has a big impact on teaching and learning where the class usually conduct in the class. But now it should be conducted it online. It is done for social distance as one of the governments' policies to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Universitas Khairun is one of the Universities in North Maluku which is conducting online teaching. One of the lecturers at Universitas Khairun teaches writing online. He also provides feedback to his students by using word review. It is conducted online. It can be noted that it is very important to research to investigate feedback strategies and how students view the feedback they received for several reasons. It is important to provide information related to the feedback strategies used in teaching writing. The result of this research will be information that can help writing instructors to improve their strategies in teaching writing. What are feedback strategies used by the writing instructor in giving feedback to students' writing?. This study focuses on investigating what feedback strategies are used by writing instructors to help their students. What students view their writing instructor feedback on their writing?. This study intended to provide information for the practitioner about teaching writing at the university level. Further, this study also hopes that it is useful for the researcher as information for the next research on teaching writing.

Teaching and learning writing in EFL classroom

Writing is more transparent in reflecting meaning than constructing the sentences Hyland (2009) in (Daud, 2016). Further, writing is a means of communicating ideas and information (Abdulhalim Daud; Nina Herlina; Nena Syahrani Syahaf Nasution, 2014). Teaching in at EFL classroom is challenging that is because of several reasons. *First*, many problems are faced by EFL students in learning to write. It can be observed from how they get ideas and organize it. They sometimes do not know where to start it when they want to arrange their ideas. However, teaching and learning to write at the EFL classroom should be treated as a process as (Troyka, 1987) stated peace of writing needs to be revised by evaluating, adding, cutting, moving material, editing, and proof reading. *The second*, writer block is an issue that is faced by the students. The students need help from their lecturer to assist them in writing.

The third, big class is an issue in teaching writing and giving feedback to students. In Indonesia, there are more than 30-50 students in one class, it is time-consuming and overload work when those students writing drafts are given feedback by a lecturer without having any assistant to help. The last is the dilemma of writing instructors to respond to students writing drafts. They sometimes do not know where to start to focus on. Many writing problems that students have when they start writing their drafts such as writing block, getting ideas, organize the ideas, word choice, and sentence structure. Thus, most students writing skills are not developed at an early age.

Requiring skill in writing need long process as stated by (A. Chaedar Alwasilah; S. S. Alwasilah, 2010) that students writing skill should be developed as early as possible see also (Daud, 2016). Futher, Ken Hyland & Fiona Hyland (2006) stated feedback is a way for writing instructor to assist their students to have a better understanding of the purpose of their want to write.

Feedback strategies in Teaching EFL classroom

Feedback is a central issue in teaching writing programs around the world (Ken Hyland; Fiona Hyland, 2006). Ellis (1994) in Daud, (2016) defines that feedback as information is given by writing instructors to students to revise their writing. There are some types of feedback that a writing instructor used worldwide. Ferris (2003) states that there are three types of feedback. They are direct feedback, indirect feedback and commentary feedback.

a. Direct feedback

Direct feedback is an instructional strategy to give a guide to the students. This strategy is used to help students improve linguistic accuracy in writing such as grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors (Hartsthon & Evans, 2015). While Truscott (1996) that direct feedback focuses on error correction, it is not effective. He argues that teachers have a lack of understanding and explain the problem to the students (Truscott, 1996).

Direct feedback is when writing instructors indicate students' writing errors and they also provide the target language form (Rod Ellis, Younghee Sheen, Mihoko Mirakami, Hide Takasima, 2008). The purpose of providing direct feedback is to guide students and builds their knowledge of the errors they made during the writing and how they review it. Moreover, According to Ferris (2003: 143), direct feedback is one pedagogical option (see also Daud, 2016). Writing instructors point out the inaccuracies and offer correct form or substitute by removing inappropriate form and provide the correct form or reformulation of the sentences. He also stated that when writing instructors apply direct feedback, they may appropriately removing incorrect form and provide feedback to assist students to revise their text to avoid misinterpret their idea that they intended.

Direct feedback is one of type feedback that offers student guidance to overcome their errors. Explicit instruction provided by the writing instructor can help the student to improve their writing skill. Many research results show that it plays in *Short Term Memory (STM)*, but according to Bechener and Ferris (2012), if it is done repeatedly, it will be activation to students' awareness on controlling their errors writing over time become atomized (John Bitchene, Dana R. Ferris, 2012).

b. Indirect feedback

Indirect feedback is a way of writing instructors' responses to students' writing by indicating students' writing errors or mistakes without providing any correction. It is similar to Ferris (2003)

who argues that indirect feedback is an instructor let students realize that there is an error in their writing draft. The students need to think to solve their problems.

There are some techniques of delivering indirect feedback such as cycling, underline, highlighting, provided questions or using error codes that have been committed. Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) argue that indirect feedback is when a writing instructor provides feedback to students' errors without correcting, she or he just provide the code and let the students edit by themselves. Indirect feedback is used by writing instructor is questioning an issue without providing the correct one (Ferris, 2003). Below are examples of indirect feedback:

The student text excerpt below has been marked in two ways: (1) Errors in five larger categories marked; (2) Errors in smaller, more discrete categories.

Coption A (Larger)

Lying is considered dishonest, cheating, or not telling the true, but can anyone tells that he or she never V SS ever lie? Of course not, "everyone lies." I used to lie, and I cannot guarantee that I will not lie again in WW the future. Many people lie because they want to make fun while others lie to take advantage of someone WW else. However, lying is harmful while the person we lie to discovers that we are telling a lie. Despite of WW that, all lies are not necessary bad or wrong.

We sometimes lie because we want to make people happy. I lied to a girl, for she would get mad. V WW I met a girl four years ago. She is very quite, but her friend, Mindy, likes to talk a lot. I liked Mindy because she and I had a very good conversation. While Mindy left, I told that girl that I liked her more WW than Mindy because Mindy talked too much. I also told her that most quite girls are polite and honest, so so she must be a very good girl. Although I really didn't her, I lied to make her happy.

KEY: V = verb errors; WW = word choice/form errors; SS = sentence structure errors.

The example above indicates clearly that how a writing instructor provides feedback to students' writing by applying indirect feedback. Those type of feedbacks will let the students trying to understand and identify their writing errors (Purnawarman, 2011). It is challenging for the students who received indirect feedback to process those feedbacks.

c. Commentary Feedback

Another feedback that sometimes students get in their writing when they submit their final project to their advisor. It is a type of instruction and also questioning the students' works. This type of comment that students get not only from their final project but they also get such feedback when they study writing subjects. This type of comment can provoke the students to think about their writing drafts. Sommer stated that "written comments can be more useful when they are connected to classroom practice by using the term and description from lessons" (Kelly, 2015). An issue that should be considered when a writing instructor provides feedback to students writing is not only how many a writing instructor gives correction and suggestions to their students' paper but also a writing instructor engage their students in a meaningful way of communication that can help students understand the feedbacks (Kim, 2015). Another type of comment suggested by (Kim, 2015) to the teacher to use in providing feedback to students' writing is advice. This type of feedback can be a solution to encourage students to do revisions and develop their awareness of writing as a process.

RESEARCH METHOD

This is a qualitative case study research designed for several reasons. *First*, this study is conducted in a natural setting in which the researcher focus on feedback strategies used by lecturer respond to students' writing draft. *Second*, purposive sample is used in choosing the subject of this research (Alwasilah, 2012). *Third*, the instrument of this study is researchers. *The last*, researchers act as a non-participant of an observer (Djam' an Satory and Aan Komariah, 2010). This study was conducted at Universitas Khairun by having direct interaction with the lecturer to get data. The

subjects of this study are 15 students. They study English as a Foreign Language. Their writing draft was collecting as documents in this study.

There were at least two techniques administered to obtain data in qualitative research as stated by (Alwasilah, 2012) that qualitative research usually uses at least two data. They are documents and in deep interviews. *First*, the document here means that students' writing which giving feedback by their lecturer. *Second*, interviews were conducted to obtained more information about students' perspectives on the feedback that they received. Those documents are collected to be analyzed (Creswell, 2009).

This part is very important for the researcher to choose an analysis technique that leads the researchers to crystalize the information for the readers and the next researchers in this issue. Content analysis is very suitable for this research. There are several reasons for choosing content analysis because data of this research are documents which are collected through observation, students writing draft, and interview. There are several steps to analyzing this research data. *First*, Data that has been collected will be displayed. *The second*, data will be display read and coding based on their uniqueness and emerging. *Third*, Data will be analyzed based on the theory proposed by (Ferris, 2003).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher finds several feedback strategies that were used by the lecturer to give feedback on students' writing. Those feedback strategies are indirect feedback, direct feedback, and commentary feedback.

Indirect feedback

There are several feedback associate with indirect feedback used by the lecturer to give feedback to students' writing, such as underline, *coding*, *question*, and *symbol* to indicate students' writing errors. There are several aspects can be observed from the finding. The first, feedbacks provided by the lecturer's associate with types of techniques which have stated by Scholars, such as underline, cycling, questioning, coding and using symbols (Hyland, K. Hyland, F., 2006:85; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). Second, lecturer used various feedbacks to respond students' writing errors as suggested by Scholars. The sample of lecturer's feedback strategies can be seen in the appendix 1.

Third, the purpose of giving indirect feedback to students' writing is to enhance students' writing skill by giving chance to students to correct their writing errors by themselves. It can be noted that the lecturer using indirect feedback for two reasons: first, the lecturer let the students to solve their problem. Second, it encourages students to think to find the correct form.

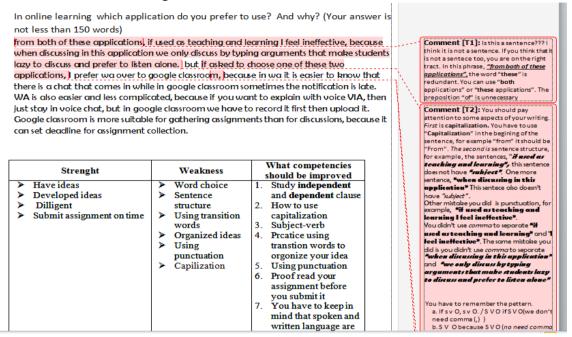
Indirect feedback was categorized into two types of feedback, namely coded feedback and uncoded feedback (Ferris, 2003:150). Coded feedback is a type of feedback which enables the teacher to indicate the students' errors in writing by coding. Meanwhile, uncoded feedback is a type of feedback, which allows the teacher to indicate the students' errors in writing.

a. Uncoded feedback

Uncoded feedback found in this study shows that the teacher just indicates the errors in students' writing by highlighting, underline, color without specifying their type. Those types of techniques are consistent with the types proposed by Ferris (2002) that "the teacher indicates errors through circling, underlining, and highlight without providing the correct form." In addition, Ferris & Hedgcock (2005) argued that uncoded feedback has the most potential for helping students in developing their second language proficiency and metalinguistic knowledge.

Furthermore, the teacher used *questioning* to allow students to think how to revise their writing errors. The teacher used *question* in giving feedback for some reasons: first, the teacher tried to challenge students to think logically. Second, the students read their writing and think of

the logic of their writing idea (Ferris (2007: 136). Third, the teacher used *question* to encourage the students to think more clearly and critically and to communicate their ideas through the written form. The teacher's comments indicate that authority and ownership of the paper still belong to students (Sommers, 1982 in Ferris and Hedgcock (2005:199). An example of question given by the teacher to a student's writing is below:



The example above shows that the lecturer used question to require the students think of their sentence construction. The use of questioning technique indicated that the lecturer has applied several steps of teaching writing as suggested by theorist (see chapter two). First, teaching writing as process, writing instructors provide question such as "in this a sentence?". the lecturer ask the students to read the sentence and revise the sentence. Second, lecture let students have their own decision. Third, the teacher avoided too much intervention to students' idea (Somer, 1982:148).

b. Coded feedback

The teacher used coded feedback to indicate students' writing error. There are several types of coded feedback that the teacher used to respond to students' error in their writing; those types will be presented in the table 4.3 below:

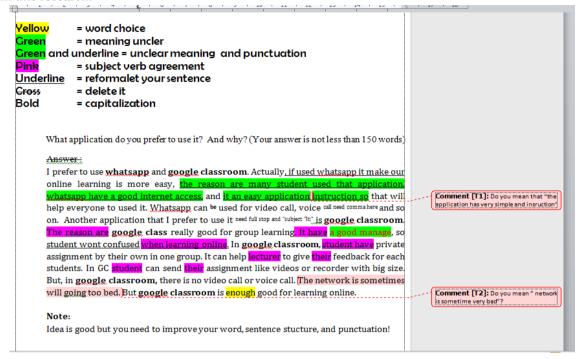
Table 1. Coded feedback

No	Coding	Stand For
1	Yellow	Word choice
2	Green	Unclear Meaning
3	<u>Underline</u>	Reformalet your sentence
4	Bold	Capitalization
5	Cross	Delete it
6	Green and underline	unclear meaning and punctuation
7	Pink	subject verb agreement

These types of coded feedback in the table 4.1 above were found in students' writing drafts. The teacher used "Yellow Color" to indicate students' word choice errors, "Green" for unclear meaning and "Underline" for Reformalet your sentence. It has been stated by Ferris, 2003 in chapter two that "coded feedback is more helpful to students than simple error location because it

helps them to access metalinguistic information they may have learned (e.g., about verb tense rules or subject—verb agreement), giving them more tools to solve problems".

The example below will describe how coding feedback were applied in the students' writing in this research.



The example above shows that the lecturer used coding feedback point out students' writing errors, the most coding using in the provided example above is *pink color* to indicate students' *subject verb* error, for example, "*when learning online*" instead of "*when they are studying online*". It was also seen that the lecturer used some other feedback strategies, for instance, *cross check, underline, question* and *rewrite correct*. To confirm the use of coded feedback by the teacher in this study, interview was conducted.

Direct feedback

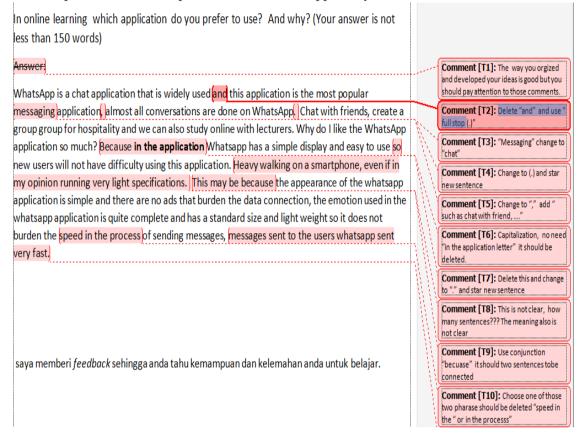
There are several feedback that has been found in students writing draft which is associate with direct feedback to respond to students' writing. Direct feedback in this study can be seen from the students' writing draft where the leacturer *deleted*, *inserted*, *added* and *rewrote some words*, *phrases*, *and sentences*.

This feedback strategy is consistent with Srichanyachon, (2012:10), who states that "direct feedback is a technique of correcting students' error by giving an explicit written correction." In addition, Purnawarman (2011: 28) states that teachers commonly use direct feedback to correct their students' mistake or error. It simply means that a teacher corrects the students' errors with providing the correct written form.

In line with this, Ferris (2003: 143) argue that teacher can use direct feedback to correct beginner students' errors in their writing. Ferris states that a teacher usually gives direct feedback in various ways, such as by removing an incorrect or unnecessary word, phrase, or morpheme; inserting a missing or expected word, phrase, or morpheme by providing the correct linguistic form above or near the mistaken or in the margin (see also Ellis, 2008; Purnawarman, 2011: 28).

Based on the explanation above, it can be interpreted that a lecturer has to use direct feedback because of several advantages: *First*, it provides explicit information. *Second*, it helps students to understand their mistake and how to avoid it in the next writing (Ellis, 2008). *Third*, it

provides correct form or substitution by deleting and inserting the correct form or reformulates the sentences (Ferris, 2003: 143). Ferris further argues that using direct feedback enables students to know their problem. The example of direct feedback applied by the lecturer is as follow:



The example above shows that the teacher used direct feedback to correct students' writing errors. It can be seen from the example above, the the lecturer used several techniques to correct the students' writing. First, the student made errors in **punctuation**. This is consistent with Troyka (1987:487) who states that this error is commonly made by students in their writing. Second, the teacher added a word choice "messeging" in the first sentence in this context and the lecturer changed to the "chat". Third, the lecturer used symbol, as can be seen in the second line above "also," to indicate the students' errors in terms of word order. Fourth, the lecturer corrected the students' errors which related to unnecessary information, by removing the word "apllication" and change to with this app

What application do you prefer to use it? And why? (Your answer is not less than 150 words)

I prefer using whatsapp for my online learning application, during this pandemic. why would i choose that? Because, i think it's more simple than another application.—and—also we also can use it as a communication partner at the same time. So, you don't have to log out from the other app to the other app for make—a communication. Actually whatsapp is not a learning application, but why not if we can make use it to meake our learning more easy with this app? There is nothing wrong with that. So, that's some reason why i choose whatsapp as my partner in online learning.

Note:

You need to extend more your ideas or Explores your reason!

The above example show that the lecturer also add information to make idea most clear. For example in the sentence "if we can make our learning more easy with this app?". It was corrected to the "if we can use it to make our learning meore easy". This shows that the lecturer tried to guide the student how to to write effeciency and effectively.

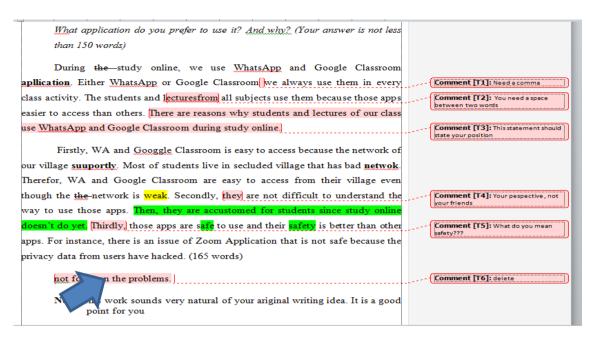
Teacher Commentary

Other feedback strategies can be observed from lecturer comment. One of the of them is commentary feedback which has been stated in chapter two. It classified into the three categories that are *encouragement or suggestion*. *appraisal followed by criticism feedback*, *cconstructive criticism feedback* (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005:198). Those comments also found in this research that the lecturer used those comment to respond to the students writing draft. The elboration of those type of commentaries will be further elaborate in the following section.

a. Appraisal feedback

This research provides the evidence of those appraisal and criticism feedback as proposed by the scholars. There are 15 students participated in this study got various commentary feedback on their writing drafts. Those various comments are identified as encouragements, suggestions and constructive criticisms feedback.

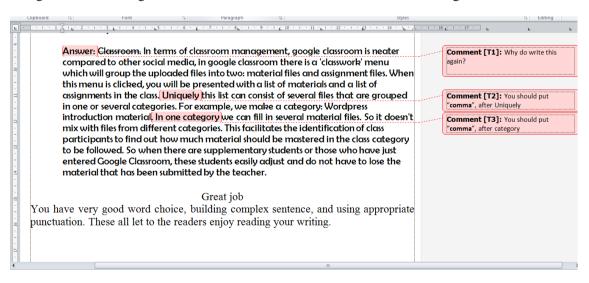
Eencouragements feedback is the way lecturer as writing instructor support their students keeps practicing writing. It has been stated by scholars that writing instructor job is not only guide students but also encourage students to keep practice. It is very helpful for students get positive feedback from their writing instructor. In the process of teaching and learning at English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, students some time do not feel confident express ideas. Thus, they faced many problems that they faced, such as less vocabulary, constructing their sentences, using appropriate word based on the context that they propose in their writing. Those aspects become obstacle for students in writing class. Here are the examples of Winda writing which got encouragement feedback from her lecturer, it will be provide below:



The example shows that the lecturer gives appraisal feedback to **Winda's** writing draft. The lecturer's comments also let the students to realize their level of writing. They will also understand what they should learn to improve. Further, the comment

"this work sounds very natural of ariginal writing. It is a good point for you".

The comment is identified as encourage feedback. It was intended to encourage Winda to keep practicing. This finding is supported by Grabe and Kaplan (1996:275) who state that "a teacher needs to encourage students to continue, to feel good about their writing and to carry the activity through to completion." Therefore, this study believes that appraisal feedback given by the lecturer is to motivate students to continue to practice. Writing need long process to be a skill writer. Thus, this comment also play an important role to help students feel good about their writing. Other encourages comment can be seen in the other students' writing draft below:



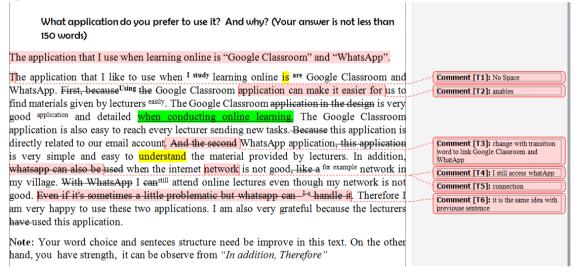
The example shows that the lecturer gives very detail about the students' writing improvement. The lecturer focus on the level of *word choice*, *building complex sentence*, and *using appropriate punctuation*. Those aspect play an important in the writing. Using appropriate writing aspect is very important for reader to understand your ideas. The example have been presented below:

"great job!. You have very good word choice, building complex sentence, and using appropriate punctuation. These all let to the readers enjoy reading your writing".

The evidence show that not only gives supportive feedback on students' writing but the correction also provided to the students writing. This correction can be guidence for students in the future writing. In addition, the clarification comment also provided by the lecturer to let students think how to revise it, for example "why do you write this?".

b. Appraisal feedback followed by criticism feedback

Previouse section of commentary feedback has been discussed about appraisal feedback itself. In this part is going to elaborate appraisal feedback followed by criticism feedback. The appraisal and criticsm feedback can be observed from the students' drafts. There are 15 students' writing draft to be collected to be analyzed. It was found that 8 students' writing draft. It means that this type of commentary feedback was dominant. The examples of the this type of comment are provided below:

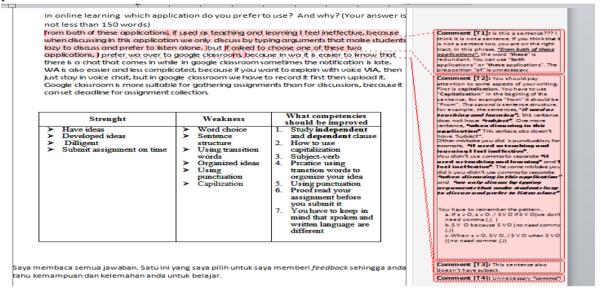


The example shows that the lecturer has read whole draft of the students writing draft and provide the comment in the end the draft. The comment can be identified combination from appraisal and criticism feedbacks. The examples of of appraisal and criticism feedbacks are provide below:

"Your word choice and senteces structure need to be improve in this text"On the other hand, you have strength, it can be observe from "In addition, Therefore"."

The first sentence shows that the lecturer used criticism feedback, "Your word choice and senteces structure need to be improve in this text". and second the sentence serves as appraisal feedback. It can be interpret that the first sentence also serve as instruction for students to improve their writing ability and also as a guidence for the student to identify what aspect in her writing need

to be learnt. This instruction serves as endnotes in the students' writing. Another example is presented below:



This example shows us very clearly that a very comprehensive feedback is provided by the lecturer at the end of the student's writing. This type of feedback is also supported by Ferris (2005 and Hedgcock,) who states that the teacher can construct the comments at the beginning and ending of the students' writing draft. The endnotes were given by the teacher as guidance for students; the teacher also provides a comprehensive overview of the paper that tends to be clear and easier to read (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005:198).

In addition, Hyland, K. and Hyland F. (2006:88) stated that endnote comments can be more useful for writing development, since they summarize major problems. In line with this, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005:197) argued that writing instructors use endnote because they can summarize their comment to the whole paper.

c. Constructive criticism feedback

Constructive criticism feedbacks were also applied by the lecturer to respond to the students' writing when the lecturer found students writing drafts not meet the requirement. Constructive feedbacks received by the students were in the form of instruction and information that the students need know. Those end note comments serve as guidence and information that lead the students to do next writing assignments. The examples are preseted below:

What application do you prefer to use it? And why? (Your answer is not less than 150 words)

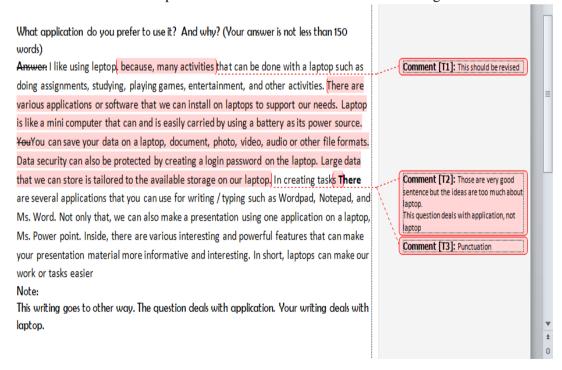
I prefer using whatsapp for my online learning application, during this pandemic, why would i choose that? Because, i think it's more simple than another application.—and—also we also can use it as a communication partner at the same time. So, you don't have to log out from the other app to the other app for make—a communication. Actually whatsapp is not a learning application, but why not if we can make use it to meake our learning more easy with this app? There is nothing wrong with that. So, that's some reason why i choose whatsapp as my partner in online learning.

Note:

You need to extend more your ideas or Explores your reason!

The student were going to state his reason of choosing the application that he used. As Ferris and Hedgcock (2005:198) agreed that the teacher can give constructive criticism into their written comment. The above instruction implied that the students made a number of mistakes. In response to these situations, the lecturer provided commentary feedback in form of instructions by requires the student to make effective sentences.

Basically, either appraisal or criticism feedback is intended to motivate the students to continue their writing. In fact, some students like appraisal feedback while other students like criticism (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005:199). These findings confirmed the purpose of this study to investigate what types of feedback that the teacher used and to reveal the rational behind the use of each feedback. Another the example below was taken from the students' writing draft:



The example shows that the lecturer requires the student to revise his ideas in order to obtain more reasonable ideas and focus on the given topic by giving written commentary "This writing goes to other way. The question deals with application. Your writing deals with laptop".

Those comments are identified as criticism feedback. The endnotes were given by the teacher as guidance for students; the teacher also provides a comprehensive overview of the paper that tends to be clear and easier to read (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005:198). In addition, Hyland, K. and Hyland F. (2006:88) stated that endnote comments can be more useful for writing development, since they summarize major problems. In line with this, Ferris and Ferris and Hedgcock (2005:197) argued that writing instructors use endnote because they can summarize their comment to the whole paper.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the research findings as response to the researcher question that offer in this research concerning the teachers' written feedback strategies. Further, recommendation in this study is presented for teaching practical and additional research on teaching writing.

This study investigates a lecturer feedback strategies respond to students' writing at one of university in North Maluku nstudents' which the student study English as their major. The research findings in this research are consistent with those presented by several scholars in chapter two that in teaching writing, a witing leacturer use several feedback strategies to respond to students' writing. They are indirect feedback, indirect feedback, and commentary feedback to respond to students' writing errors.

Limitation of this study, this consistent with previous researchers but several limitations can be found in this study: first, small number of participant participated in this study because of the complexity of the analysis. Second, there is no investigation the lecturer intension of using those feedback strategies. Third, the absences of interview data cross check the finding data. The last is this research also does not explore the effect of those feedback strategies.

Concerning the several limitations can be found in this research. There are several suggestions for the next the research; first, the next research should cover more number of participants. Second, the next research should investigate the lecturer intension of using those feedback strategies. Third, the next research should use interview to cross check the finding data. The last is the next research should also explore the effect of those feedback strategies used.

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