

WHATSAPP CLASS: ESTABLISHING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL THROUGH FEEDBACK ACTIVITY IN THE EFL ACADEMIC WRITING COURSE

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ABSTRAK

This study concerned with how students established groups' feedback that support their cognitive presence. This study used a case study. Convenience samples were 15 students majoring in English language education department at the university of Muhammadiyah Aceh. Thematic analysis was used to examine the information from the written-based communication that were converted into Microsoft Word documents. The data was processed using NVivo software to code indicators emerged. Content analysis was used to analyse comments in the draft and final essays after feedback activities. The results of the feedback activity showed that the students attempted to construct cognitive presence in chats and written texts. In WhatsApp, the triggering, exploration phases appeared. The students did much integration phase by giving types of corrections on draft essays. Also, they did resolution phase by re-writing essays. In the draft essays, the essays' mistakes were 70.61%. In the final essays, the essays' mistakes were 29.35%. The implication shows that collaboration via WhatsApp can be implemented to construct cognitive presence.

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INTRODUCTION

For EFL students, an English writing is to be a challenging skill to pour their ideas into words. Due to their poor competence level, students frequently struggle with word choice, grammatical precision, sentence structure, alternative phrases, and cultural understanding when writing (Shang, 2019). Covid pandemic pushed students learning writing online where it was more difficult to learn.

Many lecturers utilize WhatsApp which was popular in teaching writing in Indonesia. WhatsApp allowed students to do feedback with peers without being limited by time or location (Rahmadi, 2020; Mulyono et al., 2021). Students can easily use WhatsApp web to talk to each other in real-time by scanning a QR code connecting their

computers to their phones for video call, text message, voicemail, share links, pictures, and learning videos (Colom, 2021; Dahdal., 2020).

In Indonesia, previous studies have looked into how writing learning via WhatsApp can improve students' writing skills and achievement (Riski & Ahmad, 2021; Haroon et al., 2021), in paragraph (Fattah, 2015), grammatical, lexical, mechanical writing (Andujar, 2016), critique writing proficiency (Awada, 2016), and content ideas (Haron et al., 2021). In contrast, Mirza et al. (2022) found that the language used in writing sentences by students often deviates from the spelling and grammar rules of a standard language. Linguistic expressions used affected their writing skills inaccurately. According to Salikin and Tahir (2017), even though students may incorporate images, audio, and video elements to produce high-quality written work, but the result yielded little improvement in their writing proficiency.

In particular, there is a significant gap in understanding how learning synchronously is implemented in settings of Indonesia. This study addresses the gap by examining how students learn collaboratively as online in writing course. It is significant learning writing by groups' feedback to make students participated, coming together online in discussions even though they were not present physically. At least, groups' feedback can construct their cognitive presence such as posting exercises to a peer, doing exercises, exchanging ideas, inquiring knowledge, and expressing themselves. Cognitive presence serves feedback (Garrison, 2017) through dialogic feedback (Uthem & Wittek, 2017) and corrective feedback (Yang, 2016).

This study aims to explore how students discussed tasks through dialogic feedback in WhatsApp, and what types of corrective feedback on essays. The two research inquires analysed in the cognitive presence framework.

Theoretically, online collaborative writing is good way to develop students' writing which allowing them to share ideas and knowledge in groups on various issues (Vogiatzis et al., 2022; Fitria, Trisnawati & Mulyani, 2023). Online collaborative writing through WhatsApp allows synchronous communication without time restrictions (Vogiatzis et al., 2022), and facilitates concurrent topical talks (Colom, 2021). Also, text messaging tends to be the preferred communication method between peers and lecturers (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014).

In cognitive presence framework (Garrison, 2017), it is as an iterative relationship to construct feedback that supports knowledge acquisition, and students' thinking ability to achieve richer levels of online learning collaboratively (Hosler, 2012). The are four phases

how students construct cognitive presence through students' feedback (Qiao, Tang & Hew, 2018). First, triggering events is to recognize a problem or issue. Second, exploration is to search the problem area through practices so learners can acquire essential knowledge through knowledge sharing. Third, integration is to reflect on a task. The last, resolution is to apply knowledge.

Dialogic feedback is a type of discussion or the interactive exchange engages students in actively learning about. From feedback, they enable to discuss their ideas, inquire, and provide clarification (Utheiman & Wittek, 2017), argumentation, suggestion, affirmation or negation, and personal opinion (Dirkx et., 2019; Alvarez, 2012), clarification which is a critical way, and suggestion is an advice (Guasch, et al., 2013.)

Corrective feedback is where peers give input or correct their writing (Carless, 2013). It is identified into both micro and macro level (Yang, 2016). The micro-level contains grammatical corrections which appear at most. Students corrected verb form or structure and language, language-like vocabulary, the choice of words, comma splices, fragments, run-on phrases, and verb forms, and mechanical writing, such as comma slices, punctuation, and spelling. Then, students edit their texts. Macro-level feedback includes text organization, content, citations, and reference (Kim & Emiliyanova, 2019; Hsu, 2019)

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

Yin (2013) states that an evaluative case study is to explain and give judgment about the phenomenon, incident or frequency in a context of study through various techniques of data collection. In the study, dialogic and corrective feedback activities were explained and supported in the form of frequency and percentage by quantitatively descriptive data. The study was carried out in the academic writing course at the English language education department from March to July 2021 of the academic year 2021–2022.

The criteria in choosing a setting cover a predetermined number of people to explore contemporary contextual conditions the place, free admission, simplicity, and permission (Zainal, 2016) In this study, the setting was online with the simple size in semester 6 of the English language education department, and easily getting permission.

Research Participant

Convenience participant is used in almost all research projects, and readily available to researchers, and can be used in any situation (Golzar et al., 2022). Fifteen students at the sixth-semester were as the sample; ten female and five males with 20 to 25 ages.

A researcher's role can be as the insider person which participated doing activity, while an outsider person does not involve in an activity. Both of them were as an objective observer in judging an event occurred (Cohen, 2018). The role of outsider researcher chosen without intervention in the learning process from the beginning until the end of the semester.

Research Instruments

According to Cohen (2018), observation is an interaction like an incidence, presence, and frequency in verbal or non-verbal, planned or unplanned. While, the document is written materials used to analyse large quantities of text. In this study, observation was the frequency of verbal or non-verbal, planned or unplanned. It aims to capture written phrases, and sentences or statements of discussion among students via group WhatsApp. Non-verbal means icons that students could be used. While, the document was related the assignments of four groups' essays. The following table elaborates the instruments:

Table 1. Types of Data

Aspect	Cognitive presence	Data Collected
4 groups' feedback activities	Drafting, commenting, revising conducted by EFL students to fosters persistent critical thinking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triggering event • Exploration • Integration • Resolution 	I. Observation in WhatsApp. II. Assignments of the groups' essays.

The table shows the phase of cognitive presence viewed from Garrison' theory (2017) to analyse both dialogic and corrective feedback activities.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher will observe interactions that take place, whether verbal or non-verbal, formal or informal, planned or unplanned (Cohen, 2018, p.572). Observations will focus on students' written chats in groups' WhatsApp. Written-based chats can be categorized into phrases, and sentences or statements of discussion (Forbes, 2022). They

are coded using NVivo software to get similar words, phrases or statements (Allsop et al., 2022). A Thematic analysis was to analyse written discussion of four groups taken from eight meetings of feedback activities. They were converted into files MS. Words. Then, they were uploaded into NVivo12 software to categorize the kinds of dialogic feedback. The data were processed to get frequencies and percentages. Finally, the findings were displayed at the table and evaluated.

The task documents of four groups' essays will be used to analyse large quantities of text, focus on the meaning of the text and describe the relative frequency (Cohen et al., 2018, p.674). The content analysis conducted to examine the draft and final essay assignments. The essays were read and examined to find out the kinds of macro and micro level feedback. The data were processed into percentages and frequencies. Ultimately, the results were assessed and put on display at the table.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In 'groups chat' and 'academic chat', the students composed the essays. The length of the essays were at least 750 words. Materials were such as images, learning videos from YouTube, and inquiry prompts. The steps of doing essays were included 1). composing essays, 2). discussing the essays in WhatsApp, 3). giving correction on papers, and 4). revising and re-writing the draft essays into the final essays. The titles of draft essays produced by four groups were as follows:

Table 2. Draft Essays

Groups	The Task 1 17 March 2021	The Task 2 28 April 2021	The Task 3 16 June 2021	The Task 4 26 June 2021
1.	The advantages of using blended learning.	Stimulating young students to write.	The quality of education in college.	Reflective essays.
2.	The benefit of reading English literacy in collaboration.	Dictogloss: A strategy in English teaching.	The impact of a phone cell radiation.	Reflective essays.
3.	Learning English during the Covid-19 period.	Cooperative strip paragraph.	Good and bad environments for studying.	Reflective essays.
4.	The teacher's role in teaching English in elementary school.	The benefits of collaborative writing.	Reading e-books and paper books.	Reflective essays.

The steps were included 1). composing essays by each group. 2). discussing the essays in WhatsApp, 3). correcting the draft essays on papers. 4). Then, revising and re-writing the draft essays into the final essays. On March 17, April 28, June 16, and June 26 where the students worked in the group to compose an essay. After each group had already composed the draft essays, the groups were required to give feedback on March 22, May 26, and June 23.

Observation in WhatsApp

The students of four groups read and comprehended the essays. The examples of discussion as shown in the below figures as follows:



Figure 1. Discussion



Figure 2. Discussion

In triggering process, each group raised problems of the essays and asked questions. One student of group 2 asked to group 1 in essay task 1 such as *Topik ini kayanya kurang nyambung ya? Coba baca lagi...* This topic seem very not relevant, does it? please read again...

In the exploration process, group 2 asked to group 1 that a thesis statement should locate at the end of sentences in the opening paragraph. Group 2 found the lack of fact or expert statement in the supporting paragraphs. Next, group 2 asked to group 3 about the concluding paragraph, which did not summarize the supporting paragraphs. Group 1 was notified by group 4 about grammar and thesis statement errors. For example, *good...but not completely yet and some paragraphs still have mistaken on grammar.*

Nevertheless, group 1 clarified group 2's question that the thesis statement in the opening paragraph was written implicitly. The excerpt, *...thank you all guys for the comments, absolutely right if you do not find any thesis statement on the first introduction paragraph because we made an implicit thesis statement*. Group 1's opinion to group 2, *the idea of 'the benefits of reading English literacy in collaboration' was good enough*. Thesis statement was stated explicitly at the end of the opening paragraph. The part of students' arguments and experts' opinion was well-delivered arguments and it supported the body paragraphs.

In the integration process, group 2 suggested that group 1 should write the thesis statement correctly like 'some steps of introducing language for children at an early age.' Group 2 suggested that the essay of group 4 should add references by putting the last expert's names and years. In the resolution process, this process did not appear because the activities were continued in correcting some essays.

Analysis of the dialogic feedback activity

Based on discussion, the students attempted to construct cognitive presence. the result shown from the below table as follows:

Table 3. Groups' Feedback

Cognitive Presence	Aspect	Frequency
Triggering event	Recognize problems by asking questions	11
Exploration	Exchange information	40
	Clarification	2
	Personal opinion	33
	Negation	15
Integration	Giving suggestion	26
	Giving correction on papers	×
Resolution	Re-writing the essays	×

The findings showed that there were 11 interactions of asking questions in the triggering phase. In the exploration phase, there were 40 interactions of exchanging information, 33 interactions of giving personal opinion, 15 interactions of expressing negation, and the 2 interactions of giving clarification. In integration phase, there were 26 interactions of giving suggestion. To sum up, four groups constructed dialogic feedback eventhough they were limited.

Macro and Micro Feedback on Paper

In 'group chats', group chats were employed to engage in discussions about joint projects. The example of a group corrected essays on paper shown in the following table

as below:

Feedback giver: [REDACTED] (group 4)
Essay from group: 1

The Advantages of Using Blended Learning to Solved the Differences of Students Learning Style

by [REDACTED]

Blended learning is an approach to education that combine online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some elements of student control over the a time and path (place). The blended learning ~~is an appropriate learning approach to solved~~ the difference of student learning style, because it has some advantages and strong impact for the teaching learning process to solve the difference of student learning style. *I think this thesis statement is clearer than first one.*

Figure 3. Groups' Feedback on Paper

The following table displays, the corrections of content, the organization, language, grammar, citation, and mechanical writing as follows:

Table 4. Examples of Correction in Content

Content	in-text commentary
Text 1	Comment: I think the topic is not clear in this sentence. ...Math, reading, science, and the English language are among the disciplines taught by elementary school teachers (the essay from group 4).
Text 2	Comment: These sentences confusing. ...One of the best ways to master English is to learn the language at a young age. Many people presume that the earlier person starts to learn new things, the easier he or she will, it includes writing skills. (the essay from group 1).
Text 3	Comment: Topic sentence does not need the citation...article is error ...This online collaborative learning means students learn together in a small group with a purpose (Eugenia, 2012) (the essay from group 1).
Text 4	Comment: Main idea, topic sentences and title are relevant. main idea = electronic money, topic sentence = E-money is increasingly replacing paper money or cash, and title = Will Paper Money be Substituted by Electronic Money? (the essay from group 2).

Table 5. Examples of Correction in Organization

Organization	in-text commentary
Text 1	<p>Comment: An opening, supporting & closing paragraphs are good. The thesis statement is clear in this sentence.</p> <p>...This essay will shed a light on the benefit of learning English literacy in collaboration, which involves students learning through group work or teamwork by reading English literacy. Also, conclusion is clear covering paragraph 2,3, and 4. (the essay from group 2).</p>
Text 2	<p>Comment: For supporting paragraphs, last sentence in the second paragraph is too long, and it is hard to understand. I think, the sentence needs paraphrase and split into two sentences.</p> <p>...from that statement, we also know that, this strategy not only provides a scaffold for students to begin the writing process in an engaging, authentic manner. It also scaffolds teachers in planning for intentional and interactive delivery of instruction in the writing process, with a gradual release of responsibility to the students based on content deeply learned in the classroom (the essay from group 3).</p>
Text 3	<p>Comment: Good thesis statement!</p> <p>...Reflection on several things how we write an essay, how we collaborate, how we do essay revisions, how members <u>helps</u> us in writing and understanding the material, and what is the most difficult thing for us to do (the essay from group 1).</p>
Text 4	<p>Comment: This essay needs conclusion! (the essay from group 2).</p>

Table 6. Examples of Correction in Language

Language	in-text commentary
Text 1	<p>Comment: please correct the words...</p> <p>They might begin to think <u>what</u> that if their friends can do it <u>too</u>. (the essay from group 1).</p>
Text 2	<p>effect = affected... every student achievement = learner's progress, and for express = for expressing (the essay from group 1).</p>
Text 3	<p>Comment: use transition words! so, on the other hand, and so, furthermore (the essay from group 1).</p>
Text 4	<p><i>fewer tax = for countable noun...a government digital currency (the wrong word order) (the essay from group 1).</i></p>

Table 7. Examples of Correction in Grammar

Grammar	in-text commentary
Text 1	<p>Comment: There is mistake on grammar.</p> <p>Many children are enthusiastic...about face-to-face learning which is back That are most relatable relatable. the current situation right now (the essay from group 3).</p>
Text 2	<p>Comment: Please correct this sentence ...</p> <p>Yamarik found that cooperative learning had a positively effect affected on</p>

Grammar	in-text commentary
	<i>every student learner's achievement</i> (the essay from group 3).
Text 3	...will must be would... forget 's' for 'start' ... things that missing things while we wrote write the essay...put -ing after verb like writing a collaborative essay... (the essay from group 3)
Text 4	Comment: This sentence is dangling modifier! Reported into a cashless society ... (the essay from group 3).

Table 8. Examples of Correction in Citation

Citation	In-text commentary
Text 1	Comment: Please use APA format for citations! ...Reading, according to Urquhart and William Grabe (2009:14) (2009, 14), is the method of obtaining and interpreting information in a language from a printed medium. (the essay from group 4).
Text 2	Comment: do not use capitalization when cite. ...It can be used to review of past lessons or to summarize or to synthesize information they have researched and noted in a paragraph (GLAD STRATEGIES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION, 2019).(Strategies for general education, 2019). (the essay from group 3).
Text 3	No correction (the essay from group 1)
Text 4	Comment: Put source of expert's name & year! ...Even countries like Kenya and India are slowly moving away from cash. In Indonesia itself, Bank Indonesia launched the Quick Response Indonesia Standard (QRIS) code system ... (the essay from group 2).

Table 9. Examples of Correction in Mechanical Writing

Mechanical Writing	In-text commentary
Text 1	Comment: No mechanical writing errors. (the essay from group 2).
Text 2	Comment: putting a comma after conjunction words, and see justify format.... you may need to place a comma after this word... (the essay from group 2).
Text 3	Comment: There's some spelling error and unsuitable choice of an article (the essay from group 2).
Text 4	Comment: Your groups have mistaken on comma, and punctuation. (the essay from group 2)

Analysis of Corrective Feedback on Papers

The findings of essays' mistakes conducted can be shown in the below table:

Table 10. Mistakes in Draft Essay

Group	Gram	Lang	Mechanic	Content	Orgn	Citation	Total
1	56	55	13	2	7	13	146
2	47	50	12	3	4	15	131
3	40	52	10	3	6	20	131

Group	Gram	Lang	Mechanic	Content	Orgn	Citation	Total
4	47	46	13	2	12	18	138
DE+FE	190	203	48	10	29	66	546
(%)	(24.57)	(26.26)	(6.20)	(1.29)	(3.75)	(8.53)	(70.61)

The mistakes were found in six areas: content and organization, language, grammar, citations, and mechanics (N=546). In the draft essays, the total of fault was 70.60%. The fault of grammar was 24.57%, they rectified tenses, verb forms, subject-verb agreement, and fragments. The language faults were 26.26% of articles, prepositions, or vocabularies. The faults of mechanical writings were 6.20%. The students rectified spelling, and punctuation. The faults of content in irrelevant ideas were 1.29%. The faults of the thesis statement, the opening paragraph, body paragraphs, and conclusions were 3.75%. Last, the faults of citations were 8.53% which the students rectified APA style.

In the final essays, eliminated errors from each group's essay are displayed in the below table:

Table 11. Mistakes in Final Essay

Group	Gram	Lang	Mechanic	Content	Organiz	Citation	Total
1	18	54	0	0	0	0	72
2	14	31	0	0	14	0	59
3	11	23	0	0	3	0	37
4	14	41	0	0	4	0	59
DE+FE	57	149	0	0	21	0	227
(%)	(7.37)	(19.27)			(2.71)		(29.35)

The total of faults was 29.35%. Grammatical faults became 7.37% in the area of tenses, verb forms, subject-verb agreement, and fragments. Language faults became 19.27% in the area of articles, prepositions, or vocabularies. The faults of spelling, and punctuation, content like irrelevant ideas and the citation became 0%. While, the faults in the opening paragraph of thesis statement, body paragraph, and conclusion became 2.71%. A comparison of the draft and final essays show improvement in their essays.

This section displays four groups performed the feedback of the draft to the final essays below:

Table 12. The Essays Among Groups

Group	Groups' Draft Essays		Groups' Final Essays		Groups' Essays Declination	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	146	18.88	72	9.31	74	23.19
2	131	16.94	59	7.63	72	22.57
3	131	16.94	37	4.78	94	29.46
4	138	17.85	59	7.63	79	24.74
	546	70.61	227	29.35	319	99.98

In the resolution process, each group have the final written products. Before the week's deadline, the final written product had to be already submitted. To sum up, the feedback activities on papers show integration and resolution phase mostly; group 1's essay errors total 23.19%, group 2's 22.57%, group 3's 29.46%, and group 4's 24.74%.

Discussion

The results discussed and contrasted with earlier investigations on dialogic and corrective feedback from the standpoint of cognitive presence. Eleven WhatsApp interactions involved question-asking during the triggering phase. 40 information-sharing interactions, 33 opinion-giving interactions, 15 negation-expressing interactions, and the 2 clarification-giving interactions occurred during the exploration phase. There were the 26 interactions where suggestions were made during the integration phase.

The findings are dissimilar and distinctive compared to the previous studies. In the previous study, Students actively participated in determining the feedback practice issues of one another (Yang, 2016). Other previous studies are linear like some students attempted to maintain dialogue and express themselves (Utheim & Wittek, 2017), but often feedback giver did not eagerly act as a generator of feedback (Espasa et al., 2018). The learners prefer to conduct the feedback process on papers (Dirkx et al., 2019; Alvarez et al., 2012).

However, the students did much integration process by giving types of corrections on draft essays. Also, they did the resolution phase by re-writing the essays. In Yang's research (2016) found critical inquiry by reconstructing written feedback practice.

Macro-level feedback contains organization, content, reference, and languages such as vocabulary and word choice which are significant (Farsia & Sarair, 2023), and fragments (Kim & Emiliyanova, 2019; Huisman et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the micro level contains common mistakes in mechanical writing (Hsu, 2019). In order to give group feedback, students must consider what they have learned and how they can apply it to the particular assignment (Filiusa et al., 2018). This study did not find that students discuss about paraphrasing. Students should be aware to the use of paraphrasing strategies (Sarair, Astila, & Yuniarti, 2019).

The result shows that the numbers of text revisions were about articles, prepositions, or vocabulary, tenses, verb forms, subject-verb agreement, and fragments. Then, rectifying citations, mechanical writing. Thesis statement and organization were

included in the area of text modifications. Lastly, content is focused on eliminating unrelated concepts. Their writing has improved, primarily in the area of grammar.

Conclusion

The students conduct group feedback to construct cognitive presence in the process of triggering event, exploration, integration and resolution. The study highlighted how the students were engaged in feedback activities. The students show more giving correction on papers than discussing them in WhatsApp. The corrective feedbacks are meant to correct errors in content, language, grammar, and citation. However, there were fewer errors in the final essays.

The study provides recommendations about dialogic and corrective feedback can develop the cognitive presence. Future research on a wide range of subjects and other language acquisition abilities should take into account a big population and diverse sample. In the future, quantitative research should be conducted to supplement the qualitative findings.

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