

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background of the study, aims of the study, statement of the problem, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, definition of the key terms, and organization of thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

For the past decades, the concept of learner autonomy has been widely discussed and considered as an educational goal today (Benson, 2007, 2011; Borg & Busaidi, 2012; Crabbe, 1993; Dickinson, 1993). In Indonesian education context, learner autonomy is obviously apparent in the principle of teaching and learning process adopted in the most recent national curriculum, 2013 curriculum. The teaching and learning process is expected to support students in learning by themselves (Nuh, 2003 as cited in Lengkanawati, 2016). Moreover, learner autonomy is also a part of Indonesian higher education goals (Indonesian National Education Law, 2012).

Writing plays an essential role in the process of language learning. Writing is one of the productive skills, besides speaking, that need to be mastered by students. By mastering the writing skill, students are expected to be able to communicate fluently in English in the written form. However, writing in the second language (L2) is challenging (Al-Shahrani, 2013; Richards & Renandya, 2002; Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2012). It also happened in the Indonesian context, where many students find it difficult to master the writing skill (Alfian, 2013; Hendriwanto & Sugeng, 2013; Janah, 2015; Kusumawardhani, 2015; Luthfiyati, Latief, & Suharmanto, 2015). This problem might happen because several factors such as lack of motivation, anxieties, afraid of making errors and having no idea to compose a good writing. In line with these concepts, the writing process requires an entirely different set of competencies and is fundamentally different from speaking. Written products are often the results of thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skills that not every

speaker develops naturally (Brown, 2007). Moreover, Harmer (2007) states that many students either think or say that they cannot or do not want to write because they lack confidence, think it is boring or believe that they have nothing to say.

The process of writing itself is a complex process, not only in L2 but also in L1. This problem in writing also occurs to the students of UIN Bandung. After doing an observation and interview to the teacher and students the researcher found that the quality of the students' writing was low. In the writing process, the students expect to be taught by their teacher instead of learning by themselves. This implies that learner autonomy in language learning in general and writing skill in particular is low, which negatively influences learning outcome.

Helping students improve their writing skill and be responsible for their own learning is also challenging for a teacher. It is in line with what Kulsirisawad (2012) stated that one of the challenges facing foreign language teachers is to make students become self-reliant, autonomous learners who can pursue their own learning and survive outside the sheltered environment of the classroom. Providing feedback is one of the solutions in promoting learner autonomy and improving the learning outcome of the writing skill. Hyland (2003) states that feedback is one of the ESL writing teacher's most important tasks.

Feedback itself according to Harmer (2007) is what teachers tell the students and how well they have done in terms of the language they have used or task they have performed. In addition, good feedback gives students the information they need so they can understand where they are in their learning and what to do next. Once they feel they understand what to do and why, most students develop a feeling that they have control over their own learning (Brookhart, 2008).

There are many different classifications for corrective feedback strategies, such as direct feedback strategy and indirect feedback strategy. In direct corrective feedback strategy, the teacher provides the student with the correct form. While in indirect corrective feedback the teacher only indicates the error made, leaving the students to diagnose and correct it on their own. Indirect corrective feedback strategy can be done by underlining, circling, specifying the

location of the error, and color-coded feedback. This study focus on the use of color-coded feedback because it places the student in a much more active role.

Color-coding used to mark patterns of error (Brown, 2012). For example: yellow for grammar, green for vocabulary, blue for mechanics, etc. Color-coded feedback is effective at providing meaningful feedback while maximizing time (Gillespie, 2014; Mack, 2013; Ramirez, 2016). In addition, the result of the revised works proves increase compared to the conventional feedback (Gillespie, 2014) and enhanced awareness of focuses attention and motivates students to develop their grammatical accuracy (Brown, 2012). All in all, the feedback given in this study will be in the form of color-coded feedback.

A number of studies have examined the effectiveness of color-coded feedback in writing (Brown, 2012; Gillespie, 2014; Mack, 2013; Morath, 2014; Purnawarman, 2011; Ramirez, 2016). However, to the researcher's knowledge, research on corrective feedback related to learner autonomy has been relatively few, especially in the Indonesian context, see for instance, Akmilia, Purnawarman, & Rodliyah (2015); Kulsirisawad (2012); Luan (2015); Singer, Togo, Mochizuki, & Tanaka (2013); Suludere (2012); Warni & Suryoputro (2014); Yeung (2008) The studies above indicate that there have not been any studies so far which attempt to see how the color-coded corrective feedback in EFL writing develop learner autonomy. Therefore, this present study attempts to investigate the color-coded feedback and learner autonomy in EFL writing.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the issues presented, the research problem is formulated in the following questions:

1. Is there any error reduction in students' writing after they have incorporated corrective feedback?
2. How does corrective feedback affect students' autonomy in writing?
3. How do students respond to corrective feedback in their writing?

1.3 Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are formulated based on the problems to be investigated.

The aims of the study are as follows:

1. Finding out the reduction of errors in students' writing after they have incorporated corrective feedback.
2. Finding out the effect of corrective feedback on students' autonomy in writing.
3. Finding out how students respond to corrective feedback given to promote their autonomy.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on the implementation of color-coded corrective feedback and learner autonomy in EFL writing classes in a State Islamic University in Bandung.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be significant theoretically and practically. Studies conducted under the topic of learner autonomy, particularly those related to corrective feedback, are barely available. Therefore, theoretically, it is expected that the research findings will help develop and enrich the literature on learner autonomy and corrective feedback. Meanwhile, practically this study is expected to contribute to the development of English teaching and learning, particularly in giving corrective feedback to promote students' autonomy.

1.6 Clarification of Related Terms

To the extent of the study, some terms are clarified as follows:

1. Corrective Feedback

According to Sheen & Ellis as cited in Hinkel (2011) corrective feedback is feedback received by the learners on the linguistic errors they make in their oral or written production in a second language. In this study, the term corrective feedback refers specifically to written corrective feedback.

2. Indirect Feedback Strategy

Indirect feedback refers to situations when the teacher only indicates the error made, leaving the students to diagnose and correct it on their own (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005). Indirect feedback in this study is given through color code.

3. Color-coded Feedback

Color-coded feedback refers to feedback that is given using color on students' error in their writing (Brown, 2012). In this study, color-coded feedback will be given via computer using Microsoft Word highlighter on students' mistakes. It will be focused on articles errors (red), prepositions errors (green), and verbs errors (yellow).

4. Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own learning. In this research, learner autonomy is defined as the students's ability to learn independently beyond the classroom with the lecturers retaining the function of supporting students' learning (Holec, 1981 as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2003). This study attempts to find out whether or not the use of corrective feedback helps students develop learner autonomy.

1.7 Organization of Thesis

This study is organized into five chapters as follows: Chapter One provides a general description of the study. Chapter Two deals with the theoretical framework building up theories and references for this study related to corrective feedback and learner autonomy. Chapter Three describes the methodology employed to conduct the study, involving research design, research site, participants, data collection method and analysis. Chapter Four elaborates the research findings, and discussion, and Chapter Five summarizes the findings, describes the limitations and offers some suggestions for further studies.