CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is the universal language, even though there are still some differences in norms and cultures. These differences are traditional, regional, and specific. However, English has the same quality and is recognized globally as a language among thousands of speakers of different languages (Rao, 2019). For Indonesian students, it is considered a foreign language and must exist at all levels of education. Students have to master English not only for educational purposes but also for any interests they refer to in the far future. Since English became a mandatory language in Indonesia, all levels of schools have adopted English as their first foreign language. As a universal language, English is taught starting in kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, high school, and even college.

The ongoing influence of English in the globalized world is undeniable. Recognizing this reality, most people realize that to expand their reach and grow the world, they must learn English well. Crystal (2012) points out that English continues to wield significant influence in areas such as business, technology, and education, even while facing critiques and potential transformations in the future to adapt them to the current global idea of English as the language of oral and written communication methods. Oral communication is the transmission of information from a sender to a

receiver through verbal and visual aids. Meanwhile, written communication is one kind of communication that is written and documented from sender to receiver.

The importance of writing competence in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) cannot be overstated. Writing is a fundamental skill that allows individuals to express their ideas, thoughts, and emotions effectively. It is also a crucial tool for academic success, as students are often required to write essays, reports, and other forms of written work. Moreover, writing competence plays a vital role in professional communication, as it enables individuals to compose clear, concise, and persuasive messages. As a result, it is a win-win and shareable. Hyland (2022) also states that writing can help English language learners develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. These skills are essential for success in a globalized world, where people need to be able to think critically about information, come up with creative solutions to problems, and work effectively with others from different cultures. In addition to learning how to create words and sentences, students must also be able to compose and develop written words and sentences using proper grammar. This makes it easy for the reader to grasp and satisfies the standards of the aspects of good writing, which include purpose, paragraphs, language, materials, and writing approaches.

Feedback is information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in

some way, as claimed by Lipnevich & Panadero (2021). Feedback can assist students in producing meaningful and well-organized texts. There are various sources of feedback, including peer feedback, self-feedback, and teacher feedback or teacher corrective feedback. Teacher corrective feedback might prompt students to examine their papers in terms of content, organization, communicative intent, and genre. Feedback is a vital component of English language writing classes since it acts as a bridge between a students' current writing proficiency and their target level. When students receive feedback, they typically have both cognitive and affective reactions that are closely connected. The learner can assess the situation cognitively by considering if the task is engaging and significant if they have control over the outcome, and if the feedback is clear and comprehensible. Feedback identifies gaps in knowledge, skills, and understanding, prompting students to revise and improve. This continuous cycle of feedback, revision, and improvement leads to gradual development and mastery of writing skills. It works simply like teachers can choose the topic of the comments based on the elements of the students' writing that are good or need more modification. The involvement of the teacher is important. The teacher has to give some corrections to the learners about the errors that they have made so the students will not make the same errors.

Finding effective ways to foster students' writing competence is commonly still a primary concern for any English teacher, especially in the field of writing. In the context of EFL, writing competence can be defined

as the ability to use English grammar, syntax, and vocabulary to produce clear, well-structured, and effective written texts. This ability is essential for EFL students as they strive to communicate effectively in both academic and professional settings. One of the most effective ways to foster writing competence in EFL students is to provide written corrective feedback. This is supported by Moser (2020, p. 83) who mentions that providing feedback, either verbal or non-verbal, is one of the tools teachers use in teaching. Undeniably, written feedback is an important part of teachers' lives, and the literature shows that many researchers focus on different types of feedback.

According to Li & Vuono (2019), written corrective feedback is a teacher's input to a writer's composition in the form of information to be used for revision. The value of written corrective feedback can help students in improving their writing accuracy. WCF is like a teacher's written note on a student's essay that is given after the writing is complete, not during the writing. It not only focuses on more than just grammar and spelling but it also looks at how well ideas flow and how the writing is organized. Teachers don't fix the mistakes in context; instead, they point them out clearly so students can focus on learning from them. This helps students improve their writing skills without getting stuck in the middle of the writing process. Teachers have a point of view when using corrective feedback with students in writing assignments (Suharyanti & Fauziati, 2020) : (1) point out student errors and demonstrate correct production; (2) improve student writing. Evaluate. (3) improving teachers ' strategies in teaching; this is in line with

the findings of Cheng & Zhang (2022) which shows that feedback provides students with a deep comprehension of their mistakes and challenges. As a result, their writing skills improve because they are less likely to make the same errors in future writing assignments.

In conducting the study, the researcher used the theory proposed by (Ellis, 2008) where Ellis proposed 6 types of written corrective feedback. Those types are (1) Direct corrective feedback, (2) Indirect corrective feedback, (3) Metalinguistic written corrective feedback: by using error codes and by using explanation, (4) Focused written corrective feedback: focus and unfocus, (5) Electronic feedback, (6) Reformulation.

Those six types of written corrective feedback have their own characteristics which are presented in the theoretical framework section. Following an observation of WCF practices in an EFL classroom, a content analysis will be conducted to categorize the types of feedback provided. Subsequently, this categorization will determine students' reactions and writing performance data to assess the potential influence of written corrective feedback on their writing competence. In this case, Vergara-Torres et al., (2020) also argue that teachers can effectively support their students by presenting corrective feedback in a manner that conveys the possibility of learning and growth. It is also important for teachers to communicate feedback in a way that encourages students to take ownership of their learning process and fosters a sense of autonomy. Thus, written

corrective feedback can be categorized as guidance for the students to easily know their pros and cons in writing performance.

To support the idea above, the researcher relies on some literature that stands as a guidance in taking this topic in which some researchers find out that teacher's written corrective feedback was effective in improving students' grammatical accuracy and overall writing skills. This suggests that written corrective feedback is a valuable tool for teachers who want to help their students improve their writing, regardless of the genre.

An important reference for the researcher is from Aridah et al., (2017) studied the types of WCF that students preferred and the types of WCF that teachers gave to students, and the results showed that students preferred direct WCF over indirect WCF. Teachers use more indirect written corrective feedback on the students' writing. Direct student writing to give students the opportunity to reflect on their mistakes rather than instructing written corrective feedback students in writing. This is in line with study conducted by (Utsi, 2023; Wan Mohd Yunus, 2020; Zahroh et al., 2020), which found that practicing written corrective feedback in writing classes can be an effective way to improve students' writing skills, as it can do reflection for their mistakes and doing better than the writing aspect they should pay attention to, especially in the context of English students.

This study builds on previous work showing that when teachers give written feedback, it helps students write better and more fluently. But instead of looking at all classrooms, this study focuses on one specific type

of school: full-time Islamic private secondary schools in Medan, Indonesia. While a lot of research has been done on feedback in public schools and universities, researcher do not know much about how it works in Islamic private schools. This study aims to fill that gap by focusing on one school, SMP Islam Al Ulum Terpadu Medan.

The study focus at one teacher and six ninth-grade students from different levels of English acquisition. The teacher notices that even though students are interested in writing, they still struggle with things like not knowing enough, not having good writing strategies, and not feeling motivated. These struggles make it hard for them to do well on writing assignments. This study is unique because it uses a different framework, from Ellis in 2008, and focuses on writing factual reports. This is different from previous studies, which mostly looked at descriptive or narrative writing.

To gain a clearer understanding of the students' writing competence, the researcher collected preliminary data by examining the students' written work, which included the teacher's written corrective feedback. Additionally, an interview session was conducted with one of the English teachers at SMP Islam Al Ulum Terpadu. By adopting this approach, the research aimed to gain valuable insights into the students' writing abilities and the impact of the teacher's feedback on their skill development. The collected data from the students' work indicated that there were still grammatical errors in their sentence construction. This finding aligns with

the interview session conducted with an English teacher, who confirmed using written corrective feedback to address these issues in the students' writing. That is why the researcher needs to observe in depth about the teacher's written corrective feedback that he applied in his class, especially in class E of ninth-grade students at SMP Islam Al-Ulum Terpadu. The observation brings a guidance for the researcher to make sure that the teacher will give the best written corrective feedback for students' writing and it can foster their writing skills. Through the observation, the researcher drew many discussions including the sample of the teacher's written corrective feedback from the previous lessons and also the result of the interview session that has been transcribed. It serves below :
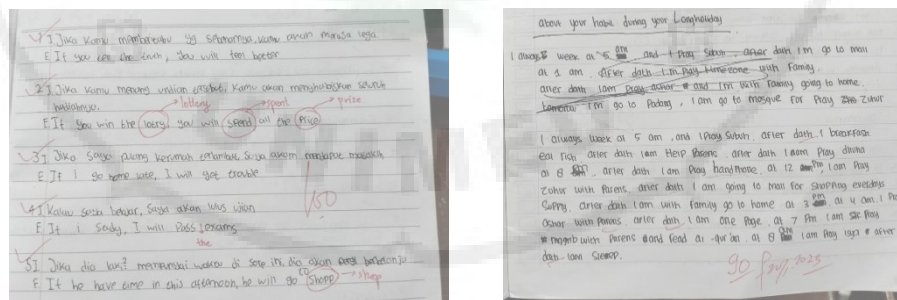

Figure 1. 1 Sample of Students' Writing

From the two samples above, the written corrective feedback given by the teacher corrects some of unproper words, or phrases that effect to the overall writing proportion. But the one thing that researcher realize from the previous written corrective feedback implemented by the teacher, he often gives any explanation towards student's error yet he has a sufficient time in his class, it just runs like only correcting and scoring students works instead

of giving any explanation to the students of why it is incorrect, and how it should be corrected in order to make them understand and not repeating the same mistakes on the upcoming writing product. Whereas to implement the best written corrective feedback it, students point of view is important to see how they perceive and improve their skills towards their current mistakes, it is also relevant to the interview result below.

Table 1. 1 Interview Session With The Teacher

R	: What types of Written Corrective Feedback do you typically provide?
T	: I am not that sure about the kind of Written Corrective Feedback itself, but usually when the topic is about writing a text or any sentence, I used to highlight its grammatical standards for Junior High School such as; the use of to be, subject, verb, and many other sentence structure that they have mistakes about. Then, I circle the incorrect answer or immediately give the correct one above or under the words. Sometimes I also give them a question on the incorrect sentences like "What's missing?" "Which one is correct"? in order to sharpen their mind.
R	: How do you ensure that your Written Corrective Feedback is clear, concise, and easy for students to understand?
T	: If there is sufficient time in class when almost all students have the same mistakes on their writing product, I give an explanation to the whole students in the class, the reason why they do mistakes and what should be the best answer instead of the one that they did. But, if the answer is different and only has some students, I explain them by calling out certain students to come to the front and tell what should be the best one and how to make it better on the next writing in order not to make them ashamed and more confident.

Thus, from the most common errors that have been found, and the result of the interview that supports this study further, the researcher is interested in doing this research to find out how the teachers apply teachers' written corrective feedback in teaching writing and how effective it is

implemented in a particular way for the ninth-grade students with various acquisition level at SMP Islam Al Ulum Terpadu.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on this research background, the researcher formulated the research problem as follows:

1. What are the types of written corrective feedback given by the teacher to the students' writing?

2. What are the students' perspectives on the teacher's written corrective feedback in EFL classroom?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

According to the problems above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To find out what kind of written corrective feedback given by the teacher to the students' writing

2. To determine the students' perspective toward teacher's written corrective feedback on their writing

1.4 The Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the use of teachers' written corrective feedback (WCF) to foster English writing competence and Ellis (2008) will be the parameter of how the teacher uses the feedback's strategy in fostering students' writing competence. This research is conducted on 6 students of the ninth-grade EFL classrooms with various acquisition levels at SMP Islam Al-Ulum Terpadu.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The study's results are expected to be helpful to readers both theoretically and practically as follows:

1. Theoretically, this research is considered to be beneficial for:
   a. The results of this study will provide valuable insights into the effective use of T-WCF practices for making significant contributions in teaching writing and affecting students' competence, particularly in EFL environments.
   b. The findings will shed light on the mechanism through which written corrective feedback can foster students' awareness and skills in the context of EFL writing instruction.

2. Practically, this research is considered to be beneficial for :
   a. Teachers can gain practical guidance on implementing effective written corrective feedback practices to foster students' writing competence in EFL classrooms.
   b. Pre-service teachers can use this study to be a motivation for preparing them into the effective use of WCF on students' writing competence within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) related to the skills they must have in this era.
   c. Researcher, this study provides further information for future researchers interested in applying written corrective feedback in fostering students' writing skills at the full-time islamic junior high school level.