

Secondary High School Students' Perception towards Teacher's Response on EFL Writing

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ABSTRACT

This article is a qualitative study conducted to investigate students' perceptions towards teacher's response on EFL writing. The data collected from the students' reflection of 12 students after receiving feedback from the teacher during three times drafting at one of senior high schools in Kendari. The instruments of the study were students' reflection, and observation sheet. The result of the study showed that students were interested towards teacher response (feedback) since it has positive affect in learning English especially on EFL Writing. Students believed that teacher responses help them in correcting their errors in writing. Besides, students assume it may help them in developing new ideas, identify error words and punctuation, as well as build new inspiration in writing process. The implies of the study showed that teacher response in learning English especially writing skill can improve students' insight and knowledge to be better than before. Teacher feedback makes easier for students to know their mistakes in writing process.

Key words: *Error writing, Students' reflection, Teacher's response.*

INTRODUCTION

The written feedback is defined as comments, questions or error correction on students' writing (Mack, 2009). Research on the use of feedback when teaching English, especially writing skill has been conducted by a lot teachers both in Indonesia and in international context (Razali and Rohaiza, 2014; Zhong, Minwei and Fangfang, 2019; Nguyen, 2019). This may happens because feedback have a positive effect on students writing, where they can reduce errors in the writing process (Srichanyachon, 2012). There some researches found that both teachers and students perceive that the teacher feedback on student writing is a critical part of writing instruction and can have a great influence on student writing (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2014).

In writing process, many students may find difficulties in writing a good and right form in English. They found difficulties in expressing ideas in a text. Mostly, their problems were related with vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation. In addition, many studies have examined this case; some strategies include feedback to overcome student's difficulties in writing (Fatemeh and Hossein, 2017). The fact shows that written teachers' feedback made them aware of their problems in grammar, expressions, and organization but might not necessarily help them correct their problems in the future (Zhan, 2016).

Meanwhile in Indonesia especially in Kendari, there have been many researches about feedback that focus on improving students' ability and perception in EFL writing. However, the researcher only focuses on the strategy that they use in classroom, such as direct feedback, indirect feedback, peer feedback and others. Meanwhile, it is important to know how the students feel about the feedback whether it is helpful for them or not. Therefore, this study investigated the students' perception in which perception can be defined as "the process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their environments (Robbins, 2005). Many factors can affect a perception, starting from the perceptual actors, perceived objects and existing situations. This study focuses on students' perception towards teacher response on EFL writing through teacher written feedback. Therefore, the aim of this study is to find students' perception towards teacher response on EFL Writing in one of senior high schools in Kendari.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method applied in this research was qualitative research. The data was gathered from the students' reflection and observation sheet which used to describe the student perceptions through teacher response on EFL Writing. The subjects were 12 English students in one of senior high schools in Kendari.

Firstly, reflection is the activity of students that contains expressions of feelings, messages, and impressions of learning that has been followed. It serves as input and criticism for researchers on the actions they have given. Reflection is concerned with consciously looking at and thinking about our experiences, actions, feelings, and responses, and then interpreting or analysing them to learn from them (Atkins and Murphy, 1994). The process of making reflection is done at the end of the meeting where, students have received three times the feedback in their writing. With the aim that students can assess how the impact of giving feedback has been given by the teacher. To make it easier for students to write down their reflections, the teacher has prepared four questions related to the material that has been given.

To analyze the data, this study used an axial coding. In coding data, the data is divided into two columns; one column for raw data and another column for the initial code. The coding process is conducted through word by word that contain students' responses on teacher feedback. Then, each type of data that has been converted into coding data will be given a "code", such as subject one can be given a code S1 (student 1). After that, the data is categorized in colour as mark of each question, for example the first question is about the impact of teacher response on learning English, to distinguish students perception use some colour are: first, "red" is increase the knowledge, second is "green" correcting the mistakes, and the last is "blue" help in choosing word.

The last method is observation. Observational activities in qualitative research are a form of observation where researchers go directly to the field to observe the behaviour and activities of individuals. Observations in this study are used to find out how students behave in response to feedback given by the teacher.

FINDINGS

The finding of this study focused on analyzing students' perception towards teacher response on EFL writing. The data documented from students' reflection after getting feedback from the teacher. The items are about the benefits of feedback in learning English, the influence of feedback on making writing drafts, giving feedback using coloured ink, and writing feedback on their draft. The result of this study indicates that students responded positively to the teacher response in giving feedback on their writing. Based on the explanation below, the data will present as follow.

1. Teacher feedback increase students' ability to learn English.

In general, the students agreed that teacher's written feedback has positive affect in learning English. One of them is increasing their knowledge in writing text. In this research, writer explained the result related to the description above where the suggestions given by the teacher; such the students may improve their writing by choosing a more appropriate word, and correcting punctuation errors and other errors. Therefore, the result of their writing is improved than the previous one.

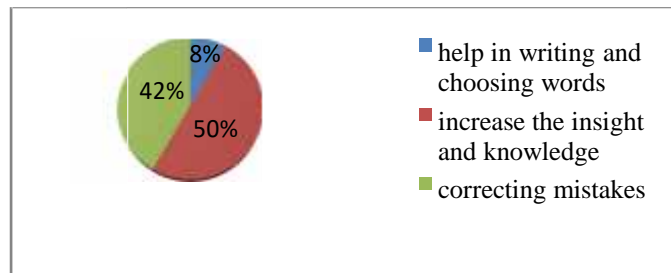


Diagram 1. Students' Perception on writing feedback

Based on the student perception on writing feedback, there are 50% of students perceived that by giving feedback, their insights and knowledge in learning English becomes better because feedback provides valuable information to build students motivation in learning English. S_1 Without feedback is found in low category in terms of their ability to learn English. It is different from the students who are given feedback; they will be in high category in learning English. This can be seen in the following quote:

"I became able to understand the material. Where, before getting feedback I did not really understand the material" (S_7)

Besides, students got other opinion from the explanation above; they found that teacher's written feedback was significantly helpful in correcting students' mistakes in writing process (42%). That can be in the form of punctuation and structure in writing (S_9). In addition, 8% of students felt feedback also helps in choosing the right words and evaluating how to write to be good (S_3). So that the results of giving feedback and revisions they do every time, finally their writing is better as expected. It is because the direction from the teacher is able to reduce previous mistakes.

"Yes ... because it corrects the wrong" (S_{10})

"I can correct my writing errors" (S_{12})

2. Teacher's feedback helps the students in process of pouring ideas in making assignments / essays.

With the provision of feedback from the teacher, students assume it can help them in developing new ideas. The following percentage presents students' opinions about the feedback given by the teacher regarding the input given to them.

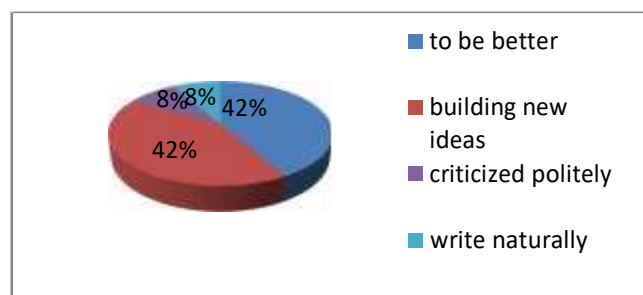


Diagram 2. Students' Perception in process of pouring ideas

The result of teacher's written feedback presenting is one of the things that make students successful in writing. 42% students think correction from teachers actually can develop ideas in their writing and build inspiration for them in making assignments. In addition they can add ideas that do not yet exist in the text (S_{12}). Like their statement in the results of the reflection they have written below:

“The feedback given by my teacher will not interfere with ideas in making essays but instead adds new ideas”(S₄)

On the other hand, 42% feedback does not disturb, but the teacher response will make student writing better than before. S₃ directions given by the teacher make writing more varied because it corrects incorrect words. Feedback also correct the error’s writing or placement of words and it help them in selecting words that are more appropriate.

“With feedback the writing is better”. (S₁₀)

Meanwhile, 8% students argue that feedback can add and build new ideas if it is presented using good criticisms because it can make students can receive the correction given by the teacher. In addition, if the teacher appeals to write in the number of its association, it does not disturb with the new ideas. In contrast, the students are becoming more confused in making a new ideas when their write a lot of writing.

“In making text is not limited to reasonable origin”. (S₉)

3. The correction of the teacher on the assignment/essay is clear and readable

The following is a presentation of the results of students' perceptions of the corrections given by the teacher both directly and indirectly

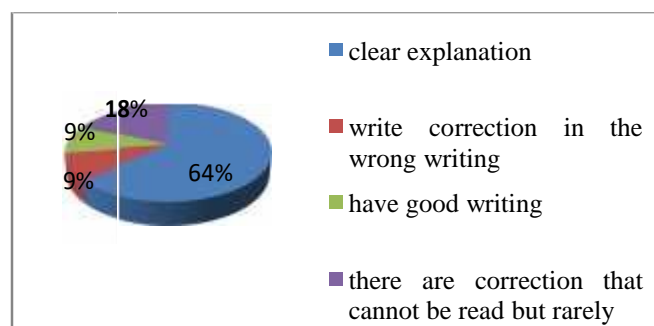


Diagram 3. Students' Perception on writing feedback

From the data above, 64% said that the explanation given by the teacher when giving corrections was very clear. Where the teacher explains in detail what students need to improve. Detailed explanations and good writing make it easy for students to understand the feedback given (S₁₂, S₃). Then write down the correction in the wrong section to make it easier for students to identify errors (18%). In addition to explaining and writing clearly, writing corrections in the wrong section makes it easy for students to understand clearly where the error lies in their assignment (S₇).

“I can understand the corrections given by the teacher because they are explained good and clearly”. (S₁)

On the other hand, some students give negative values, when there are some corrections that cannot be read or not corrected carefully, example there is the true but without accidentally blamed. The correction cannot be read usually for a less writing that clearly so that made a student asks again to the teacher (S₁₀), but errors like this rarely occur (S₆)

“Sometimes there are some posts that I don't understand, and then I ask the teacher again”. (S₁₁)

4. Coloured ink in written feedback.

The following are some of the students' perceptions of teacher corrections using coloured ink.

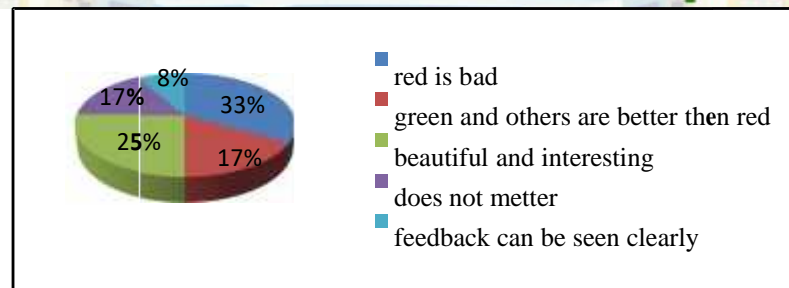


Diagram 4. Students' Perception on Coloured ink in written feedback

The following question, the part of student agreed that is red, meaning that their writing / assignment needs to be corrected (33%). In fact, students regard red is bad or not well because red is usually identical to a low value, for example a low value is usually called a red value. The red colour is a striking colour and is also synonymous with low grades, so students need to correct and evaluate writing that is less precise (S₃, S₉).

"If red colour maybe my answer is wrong or incorrect." (S₈)

To some extent, 25% students feel happy with the provision of different colours because it can attract their attention. Besides that students think that the colours used in giving feedback in their writing look beautiful and interesting. Then with this the students assume that the teacher still has the initiative to provide convenience in correcting errors (S₁₂), so students easily correct their mistakes.

"I am certainly happy to see a lot of colours in the feedback because it looks beautiful and attractive." (S₁₀)

Other than red, 17% when they see green and others they like it better because green means good even though there are still mistakes but not as bad as red. While it is synonymous with beauty students are happy to see many colours at the feedback because they look beautiful (S₂). Besides, 8% the use of coloured ink can clarify the correction given to their writing, so that the feedback given is well conveyed.

"Green can still be justified even though there is a slight error (S₆)

"We can see clearly what feedback is delivered because the colour of the ink is different. (S₄)

But some of them do not care and are not affected by the colours listed in their writing sheet (17%). They remain focused on the feedback given and colour does not affect anything in student writing task.

"I do not care and stay focused on the feedback given". (S₅)

Based on the data, using colour ink in written feedback helpfully the students see some mistake in their writing. Such as red ink identical bad value, then others colour there are some mistake but did not bad from red.

DISCUSSION

Regarding with the result in findings, feedback has beneficial effect for students' knowledge in English, especially in writing skills. Students perceive teacher's feedback increase their ability, helps in process of pouring ideas in making assignments. Detailed explanations and good writing make it easy for students to understand the feedback given and different colour ink in written feedback helpfully in identify some mistake.

Furthermore, feedback is the importance way to improve of EFL students' writing and development of their motivation (Hyland, K., and Hyland, F, 2006). Besides feedback helpful to know what they could be doing to improve their work even further another learning challenge to excite, engage, and push them forward. Develop their capability to monitor, evaluate and regulate their own learning (Nicol, 2010). And also encourages them to think critically about their work and to reflect on

what they need to do to improve it. In addition, even a minimal feedback given to students was helpful and provided a platform for the students to do self-revision which is one of the most effective lifelong learning processes, and prepared them for more writings in the future (Ismail and Nor, 2008). Where, detailed explanations and good writing make it easy for students to understand the feedback given. The process dialogue between teacher and students can foster good relationships so that it can help in improving learning process their writing in agreement with recent literature that meaningful teacher-student relationships create relatedness needs supportive learning environments (Sparks et al. 2015; Wang 2009).

Students agreed that feedback on all aspects of writing (organization, content, mechanics, grammar, and vocabulary) helped them to improve their writing (Listiani, 2017). These opinion similarity with this study, where feedback help the students in writing academic pieces better and more easily as they go through the writing process. Besides, in another research the result of the study showed feedback on grammar was more applicable than other types of feedback; the students slightly agreed that they would improve on the content of their writing (Ene and Upton, 2014). Students' reflection gave the reasons for that. It was because they had thought very hard before finishing writing an essay, such as in using grammar and limited vocabulary.

To some up, feedback is one of the most decisive elements in the teaching and learning process and helps improve students' abilities especially in EFL writing. Meanwhile, writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking how about express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader. Therefore, in writing process a student also needs some feedback to corrected their error and developing their ideas.

CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the reflection, it can be concluded that students respond positively with the feedback given by the teacher. Feedback provides valuable information to build students motivation and increase their knowledge to make good writing. It is because detailed explanations and good writing on teacher's written feedback helpful in correcting students' mistakes in writing process. Such as in choosing more appropriate words, add ideas that do not yet exist in the text, and students easily to identify the errors. One of the impacts of using colour ink in written feedback helpfully the students can see their mistakes more clearly in their writing. To some up direction from the teacher is able to reduce previous mistakes.

Giving feedback in the form of indirect feedback, the teacher expected to provide explanation, not long-winded feedback so that students can process and apply the explanation well. Then, the teacher's hand writing must be neat, beautiful and use simple language so that it is easy to read and understand by students. Moreover, an increased students' knowledge toward teacher feedback, it have benefit individual teachers. It is because each student has different perceptions of what is useful feedback. So, it can be difficult for teachers to provide feedback that will serve all students. Furthermore, teacher needs some technique to confront students' needs. Such as understanding background of the students, teacher provides and what the students want and establish good communication with students the development of students' writing skills.

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