

STUDENTS' RESPONSES TOWARD PEER REVIEW IN WRITING

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Abstrak

Sebagian besar mahasiswa *EFL* setuju bahwa mengarang adalah sebuah keterampilan yang tidak mudah untuk dikuasai dan perlu waktu lama untuk menguasainya. Untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut, berbagai macam metode telah dikembangkan dan digunakan oleh para pengajar ahli. Metode review-sejawat menawarkan masukan yang sangat bermanfaat bagi seorang pengarang. Kuantitas maupun kualitas masukan yang diperoleh seorang pengarang melalui sebuah proses mengarang, akan menghasilkan sebuah karya tulis yang baik (Saddler & Andrade, 2004). Melihat dari beberapa penelitian sebelumnya (Kern, 2000; Rollinson, 2005), memunculkan sebuah pertanyaan, apakah para mahasiswa akan mempercayai *review* dari teman sejawatnya sedangkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris teman sekelas mereka bisa jadi lebih baik atau lebih buruk. Dengan situasi ini, peneliti menyelidiki tanggapan mahasiswa yang muncul dalam tugas mengarang para mahasiswa. Peneliti memilih mahasiswa baru *EFL* di kampus sebagai subyek penelitian. Pertanyaannya; (1) jenis masukan apa yang diterima oleh para mahasiswa dalam review-sejawat? (2) bagaimana tanggapan para mahasiswa terhadap masukan dalam review-sejawat? (3) bagaimana peningkatan hasil karangan para mahasiswa dalam hal penggunaan bahasa dan mekanik setelah mereka diberi masukan dalam review-sejawat. Peneliti menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dasar, dengan hasil karangan para mahasiswa & wawancara sebagai instrumen untuk mengumpulkan data. Hasilnya, dalam karangan para mahasiswa terdapat 6 jenis masukan; langsung, metalinguistik, fokus, tak fokus, berguna, dan tak berguna. Para mahasiswa memberikan banyak tanggapan negatif, tetapi juga terdapat beberapa tanggapan positif. Selama proses perbaikan, sebagian besar hasil karangan para mahasiswa meningkat secara *microstructure* setelah mereka menerima masukan dari pasangan sejawat mereka.

Kata Kunci: tanggapan mahasiswa, review-sejawat, masukan, karangan mahasiswa

Abstract

Most of EFL students agree that writing is a difficult skill and need long term to master it. In order to solve this EFL students' problem, kinds of methods are developed and used by the expert lecturers. Peer-review provides useful feedback for the writer. Both quantity and quality of feedback which perceived by a writer throughout the writing process would produce a well-craft piece of writing (Saddler & Andrade, 2004). From the previous studies (Kern, 2000; Rollinson, 2005), a question arises as to whether students would trust peers' comments since the English proficiency of their classmates might be better or worse. With this circumstance, the researcher explored students' responses which came up in the students' writing. The researcher chose EFL freshmen in university as the subject of the study. The questions are; (1) what are the feedback types which perceived by the students in peer-review? (2) how are the students' responses toward feedback in peer-review? (3) how does the students' writing improve in terms of language use and mechanics after they are given feedback in peer-review? The researcher applied basic qualitative research and used the students' writing & interview as the instrument to gather the data. The results showed that there were 6 types of feedback in students' drafts; direct, metalinguistic, focused, unfocused, usable, and unusable feedback. The responses in perceiving feedback were mostly negative, but there were some positive responses too. During revising process, most of students' writing were improved in microstructure after they received feedback from their peers.

Keywords: students' responses, peer review, feedback, students' writing.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is similar to speaking where voice is the important substance and prime motivation which shapes these both (Jack Wilde (2004) in Romano (2004)). Furthermore, writing become a mode of communication between a writer and a reader, and here, voice-means message, which relies on the text delivered to the reader. For Romano (2004), voice is more like a writer' presence in his or her creation. These definitions may be broader when writing is the form of expression of the writer' him or herself, such as poems, diary and other compositions. Writing can also be seen as a private activity of a writer with him or herself. According to Hayes and Flower (1986) in Saddler and Andrade (2004), knowledge of writing process and some skills, such as, monitoring and composing process through self-regulation are the essence in writing.

A good writer writes based on the readers' needs and capacities because writing is a process of interaction and communication. In order to attain the same understanding, the writer should be careful to write the message before it delivers to the reader in a way which is understood by both the writer and reader. Failing to achieve this goal makes writing as ineffective process of communication.

EFL students take part in many writing activities during their learning process and they have to master how to write in form of formal language according to the academic requirements. At this point, the other problems come up because most EFL students agree that writing is a difficult skill and it needs a long time to master it. Similar statements expressed by professional and non-professional writers that the process of writing were difficult and complex (Levy, 1995).

The process of composing a good writing needs some requirements. All writers needed some other skills which will support the preparation of starting to write, such as reading comprehension skill, vocabulary mastery, using the appropriate grammar, choosing the diction, coherence of the sentences, writing style, the way how to express or deliver message in a good and right order.

Unfortunately, teachers often do common mistake when they are teaching writing to their students. The teachers are not aware that they have made a circumstance which leded the students spent too much times in copying the model of writing rather than expressing their own ideas creatively (Sokoholic, 2003). In order to solve this EFL students' problem, kinds of methods are developed and used by the expert lecturers. Peer-review method showed many positive effects for students, especially in improving students' writing and critical thinking skill.

Hansen and Liu (2005) revealed that peer response can be defined as the use of learners as sources of information, and interaction for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor, or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other' draft errors both written and oral formats in process of writing. Saddler & Andrade (2004) stated that the teacher who practices peer review can guide the students how to use the writing rubric to assess their drafts; the teacher should gives understanding that the purpose of peer review is not to assign a grade but to help the students improve their writing works.

Peer-review in many research done by Lundstrom & Baker (2009); Min (2006); Rollinson (2005); Topping (1998) and Wu (2006) showed the significant difference towards score of the EFL students' writing after they conducted peer-review. Peer-review provide useful feedback, the research found high level of valid feedback for college students. Students' responses were more specific than teacher feedback. Most writing done by L2 learners used for communicative purposes: a responsive 'real' readers allowed the writer know if his/her message was effective, and encourage the writer to compose his/her writing in line with the characteristics and demands of his/her readers (Rollinson, 2005). Both quantity and quality of feedback which perceived by a writer throughout the writing process would produce a well-craft piece of writing (Saddler & Andrade, 2004). The other study, Lundstrom & Baker (2009) found that the receivers and the givers of feedback have gained positive effects in their post-test of writing after the treatment of peer review. Another finding, a stronger tendency for self reflection from the students were constructed in peer feedback group than teacher feedback (Miao, Badger, & Zhen, 2006).

The corrective feedback or error correction in peer review were given for one reason, improved the accuracy of writing (Bitchener, 2008). In peer review, the feedback was given by the peer(s), not from the teacher. According to its form, feedback was classified into two forms, oral feedback and written feedback. The oral feedback was a feedback which given orally by the reviewer or corrector to the writer in students conference-part of the session in peer review. The second one, the written feedback was in form of words or codes in the students' draft. According to the implementation of feedback in class, feedback was classified into two categories; direct and indirect feedback. Direct feedback showed the writer's error and directly gave correction by the reviewer; it can be oral or written form. Some examples of direct, which mentioned by Bitchener (2008) such as crossing out of an unnecessary word/ phrase/

morpheme, the importation of a missing word/ phrase/ morpheme, or the provision of the correct form or structure. The indirect feedback only showed the writer's errors without giving the correction; mostly it took a written form by using symbols (underlining, cross, circle, code etc.). The various types of feedback were have been proved to bring many positive effect such as reducing the errors production (Lizotte (2001) in Chandler (2003)), improvement in accuracy of writing (Chandler, 2003), transferring abilities to analyze the composition (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009), and ability of self reflection (Villamil & De Guerrero (1998) in Miao et al. (2006)).

From Rollinson (2005) and Kern (2000) perspectives in EFL contexts, a question arises as to whether students will trust peers' comments since the English level of their classmates might be better or worse. With this circumstance, the researcher explored students' responses which come up in the students' writing works.

1. What are the feedback types perceived by the students in peer-review?
2. How are the students' responses toward feedback in peer-review?
3. How does the students' writing improve in terms of language use and mechanics after they are given feedback in peer-review?

METHODS

The researcher applied basic qualitative research (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010). There were 6 subjects participated in this research. The researcher chose 2 students as the representative of each level as the sample. Poor students have scores 2.50-2.75. Average students have scores 3.00-3.50. Excellent students have scores 3.63-4.00.

Some instruments were used in this research to collect the real actions of the freshmen which draw their responses and their writing. First, the document was used to capture the feedback & the revisions written in students' drafts. Second, the researcher conducted interview to describe the students' responses towards peer review.

As note, all students were acted as the writer and the peer. The drafts (included the feedback) and the revisions were sent by the students to the lecturer by email. The process of writing-commencing-revising between the students (the writer) and the peers were repeated continuously until the end of semester (12 meetings). The students' drafts in this study were collected by the lecturer of Paragraph Writing, and then the lecturer gave the data to the researcher. The interview were conducted after the class over, it consisted by 10 questions.

In analyzing the data, the students' writing (include the feedback) were organized by some categories such as students' name & level, draft number, error, type of feedback, and revision changes. The researcher adapt and combined Ellis's (2009) & Miao, et al. (2006) feedback's code to give labels (coding) the type of feedback. Meanwhile, the revisions were coded by using Faigley & Witte's (1981) taxonomy.

The transcriptions of interview distinguished based on the indicators of interview; responses toward the lecturer's explanations and instructions, responses toward experience of peer review method, responses in receiving and choosing feedback, responses in performing duty as the correctors, and responses using feedback from the peers.

RESULTS

1. Feedback types perceived by the students

The results showed that there were 6 types of feedback in students' drafts; direct, metalinguistic, focused, unfocused, usable, and unusable feedback. Totally, there were 61 comments produced by the peers, it consisted by 51 usable feedback and 10 unusable feedback. These 10 comments of unusable feedbacks gave to Ani (5 comments), Budi (4 comments), and Citra (1 comment). From these 51 comments of usable feedback, metalinguistic feedback marked in 31 comments, unfocused and focused feedback marked in 16 comments and 1 direct feedback marked in 1 comment. The amount of peers which reviewed students' drafts varies; Ani, Budi, Citra, Dian, Evi had 4 peers and Faya had 3 peers. Totally, there were 12 peers who reviewed on 24 drafts, 8 peers were excellent students, 2 peers were average students, and 1 peer was a poor student. Some peers might review more than 1 draft, each peer could produce more than one comments or feedback type, and each feedback might indicate as one or more types of feedback.

There were many types of written corrective feedback provided by the writing expert, but most of the peers gave the explanation and put the correct form to ease the students revise the drafts. These explanations were marked metalinguistic type (W3). The peers pointed out the errors which they found in the students' works by writing the explanations and the corrections within the margin; under or beside the paragraphs.

From Budi's draft no. 2 (table 1.1); the peer gave clear and enough explanation about the errors she found. The peer did not only criticize but also gave the solution by putting the correct form. These explanations in metalinguistic feedback gave better understanding to the students about the errors they made.

In Citra's draft entitled 'Dancing'; the peer gave unfocused feedback (W5). These were comments categorized as unfocused because the peer analyzed the text by covering many (unfocused) aspects; those were diction, relevance of sentence, structure, and supporting idea.

After the unfocused feedback, the other feedback which used by the peers was focused feedback (W4). The focused feedback below focused on relevancy of sentences between Ani's supporting idea and controlling idea.

The amount of focused (W4) and unfocused feedback (W5) was equal. Totally, there were 16 focused and unfocused feedbacks which marked in this research. Most of the focused and unfocused feedbacks in students' writing were identified as metalinguistic type too.

The last corrective feedback which noticed in the student's writing was direct feedback (W1). It provided by Evi's peer in Evi's draft no. 4. The peer gave strikethrough to point out the errors and the corrections or the right forms were written in red color which written in cage.

Besides these written corrective feedbacks (metalinguistic, focused, unfocused, and direct), there were other types of feedback, called usable and unusable feedback. The written corrective feedbacks were mostly taken form in codes or comments, while the usable and unusable feedback always in form of comment, advice, appraisal, critique, or suggestion.

The usable feedback used as one of reference to revise the students' drafts beside the corrective feedback. The aim of usable feedback was same as the written corrective feedback; it aimed to revise the error in students' writing. The comment was categorized as usable feedback because the peer criticized the content of paragraph. The peer stated that the paragraph was not specific enough.

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In Ani's draft 1, she only perceived unusable feedback. The peer did not find anything wrong with Ani's writing and the peer considered Ani's writing was good and totally clear.

In the next case, there were three students who received both the usable and unusable feedback in one draft; they were Ani, Budi, and Citra. This one of the example was written in Citra's draft.

2. The Students' Responses

These results of students' responses toward feedback in peer review showed various responses from

the students. Most of the responses were negative but there were positive responses too. Some examples of negative responses were difficult to understand the lecturer's explanations, no significant improvement in students' writing, chose the feedback without specific criteria, hesitancy about validity of corrections etc. The positive responses such as trained the students to self-study, made the students' drafts better, shared ideas among the students etc.

The responses toward the lecturer's explanations and instructions

From the interview, the results identified that there were some negative responses from the students. First, the students said that they felt uneasy to follow the lecturer's explanations, only a few students who were able to understand the lecturer's explanation. The difficulty to understand the lecturer's explanation might be caused by the different language proficiency between the students and the lecturer; the lecturer used formal and scientific language which had high language proficiency.

Second, the students faced difficulty in revising process; they did not know how to revise their drafts. Suddenly, the lecturer gave an instruction to revise, but the students expected that there should be more explanations about how to revise the draft from the lecturer. This circumstance became more difficult because there was no written guide book writing for the students.

The difficulty of understanding the explanations had influenced the students' interpretations too. There was a different interpretation among the students related to the lecturer's explanations. Some of the students expected that the lecturer's explained about how to correct drafts, but the other students thought that this explanation was an instruction.

All these negative responses above were related to the students' ability to adapt with the lecturer and her way of teaching. The possibility of misinterpretation would be increase if the students and the lecturer unable to adapt each others.

The responses toward the experience of peer review method

From their experience, the students proposed some advantages and disadvantages about peer review. Most of students had opinion that the benefit of peer review was sharing ideas with the peers. By sharing the ideas, both the writer and corrector could expand their perspectives and knowledge. Citra added that there were more advantages of peer review beside the collaboration of ideas. She confessed that peer review helped the students to conduct self-reflection and get better

understanding of the writing process; writing-commencing-revising.

In the other side, the peer review had 2 disadvantages. First, the limited knowledge, if both the writer and reviewer did not understand anything about the material then they should back to the lecturer as their last choice. Second, the students had not seen any significant improvement in students' writing. The students' quality of writing was same as before they practice the peer review.

The responses in receiving and choosing feedback

Most of the students had the same response; they collected all feedbacks which they received. In the next step, some students selected the feedback which had the same idea with them and the other students would choose the feedback according to their intuition; without any specific criteria.

Beside the feedback from the peers, the students also received feedback from the lecturer. Many students agreed that lecturer's feedback was the priority because the lecturer was much smarter than the students, but a different argument came from Faya (poor student). Faya suggested that the lecturer's feedback was not always correct. Moreover, Faya difficult to understand the lecturer's feedback because of the differences of the language proficiency and the way of talk between Faya and the lecturer; it was easier to understand her peers' feedback.

The other feedback also received by Evi (poor student), she received feedback from her mother; she chose her mother as the corrector. Evi believed the feedback from her mother even though her mother was not an English teacher.

The responses in performing duty as the correctors

The duty as correctors had a big responsibility; they reviewed and gave corrections in peers' drafts. Most of the students faced difficulty in correcting their friends' drafts. The students doubted their validity while correcting the drafts. For example, Budi as an excellent student revealed a statement about his experience as the corrector, he could review and gave corrections in his peers' drafts but he doubted whether the result of his corrections were right or wrong.

In the other side, there was a student who confessed that the duty as a corrector was not difficult job. Ani (excellent student) promoted her experience as corrector was an exciting moment because after correcting the drafts she knew the abilities, the accuracy of writing and the language styles from various students.

The responses in using feedback from the peers

After practicing peer review to writing a descriptive paragraph, all of the participants did not get any bad experience after they used the feedback from the peers. The students confessed that they never being tricked by feedback from the peers. None of them had bad experience after used the feedback from the peers. According to Ani's personal experience, she never failed to choose the feedback which helped her to revise the draft. As long as the writer chose the feedback very carefully, the writer would not take the wrong choice. This result showed positive response in using feedback from the peers.

3. The Students' Writing after Receiving Feedback

Most of students' writing were improved in terms of language use and mechanics after they received feedback from their peers. For example, Evi perceived correction from the peer about the structure in draft 3; she revised in line 2. The revision changes marked as text base micro because Evi did not change the main idea, it marked as deletions too because she eliminated one sentence (whereas the wide of Unesa Ketintang...). The revision was easier to understand because the sentences were arranged neatly.

The other similar case about revising, some students preferred to make new writing rather than revise their previous drafts; it was done by Budi in draft 1, Citra in draft 1, and Faya in draft 2. The peer said that Budi's essay was not a descriptive text; meant that Budi failed to write descriptive text then he made a new ones. Budi's revision was categorized as text base and macro changes.

Unfortunately, there were some students who did not change (revise) their drafts after received feedback from the peers; these students avoided the feedbacks. Citra did not make any revision in draft 3 even though her peer corrected her subject's focus (building) which she described. The peer reminded that Citra should focus on one subject, but she described more subjects such as students' activities, styles, and languages. These improper actions also occurred in Budi's draft 3 and Faya's draft 4.

DISCUSSION

The results inferred that there were 4 types (metalinguistic, focused, unfocused, direct) of written corrective feedback from Ellis (2009) and 2 types (usable and unusable) of feedback from Hyland (1998) in Miao, et al. (2006). The metalinguistic feedback marked in most of students' drafts, it was contradicted with Ellis's (2009) statement which said that metalinguistic feedback was rarely used by the peers because it was time consuming.

The contradiction in this study might be caused by the fact the lecturer did not give enough explanation about the advantages & disadvantages of each types of feedback, and how to use the various types of feedback properly. In fact, the students did not have enough experience in using many types of feedback; they do not realize that metalinguistic feedback is time consuming even though it really helps the students.

The students' responses produced various results. A couple of students expressed different interpretations about correcting. The misinterpretation implied that the students felt unprepared for the task; it was in line with Cheng & Warren's (1997) study in which they found that difficulty to understand the lecturer's explanation might be caused by the different language proficiency between students' and lecturer. Related to the feedback in the students' drafts, three students (Budi, Citra and Faya) refused to revise their draft. The action of refusal was also found in Hyland's (2000) results. There were two possibilities which influenced the students to avoid the feedback; the students did not trust the feedbacks from peers or the students moved to write to a new topic. The students do not have certain criteria to review the drafts; they only choose feedbacks which have the same idea based on their intuitions. Unfortunately, there was a circumstance while the needs of correcting and providing feedback could not be achieved by the peers. The limited knowledge and less proficiency of peers are the main reasons. This circumstance is similar to that Maarof, Yamat & Li's (2011) findings. The students doubted their validity and objectivity to correct the draft were also prove in this research (Cheng & Warren, 1997). In order to revise the drafts, most students put the lecturer's feedback as their preference rather than the others (Miao, et al., 2006); the lecturer's feedback were more trusted than peers' feedback (Tsui & Ng, 2000). Beside the negative responses, some positive responses also proved in this study. The benefit such as sharing or negotiating ideas in this study is in line with the previous studies by Mendoca & Johnson (1994) and Min (2006). Other positive responses in Miao, et al. (2006) and Topping (1998) such as self reflection and discussion during peer review also found in this study; these actions enhanced mutual understanding and reduce misinterpretation among the students.

In the last issue, the students' writing are improved in terms of language use and mechanics after received feedback but most of students do not realize it; the drafts improve in microstructure way. This finding is similar with Lundstrom & Baker's (2009) conclusions which stated that the beginner students have significant improvement in their writing after peer review.

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results presented in the previous chapter, three conclusions can be drawn. Most of students master metalinguistic type of feedback, among 4 types of written corrective feedback. The students' responses toward the feedback show more negative than positive reactions toward various feedbacks they received. At the end, there was an improvement in terms of students' language use and mechanics in students' writing (microstructure) after they receive feedback in peer review

Considering the students' lack of ability in applying the various feedback types, it is suggested that teachers or lecturers conduct focused training on the feedback for the students. The training helps the students learn how to distinguish each types of feedback. Besides that, the students are expected to understand the advantages & disadvantages for each types of feedback. In order to reduce the negative responses toward feedback, the teachers or lecturers should be more concern to the pre-activity of peer review such as: discussion about the students' experience with peer review, the types of feedback which students prefer to use and the linguistic criteria to review the draft. Indeed, even though the pre-activity is time consuming but the role of pre-activity has significant effect to the success of peer review.

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