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Student's Reactions and Preferences to Teachers' Feedback on Weekly Journal Activity at English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to reveal students' reactions and preferences to teachers' feedback on weekly journal activity. This study was qualitative research that the data were compiled from six students batch of 2015 at English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta through in-depth interviews. The results showed that the reactions of the students were satisfied with teachers' feedback, showed enjoyment in learning, felt curious in learning, and got demotivated in learning.

The result also showed that the students preferred written feedback to oral feedback as they were easier to identify their errors, and oral feedback became the second choice to comment on their work. The students also believed that the language and behavior of the teachers became the strongest effect creating the reaction of the students. On giving feedback, the teacher sometimes used casual language that made the students easy to understand it. Sometimes the teacher also used funny words to enhance students' enthusiasm to learn.

Keywords: *weekly journal activity, feedback, students' reactions, preferred feedback*

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Introduction

Recently, to teach foreign language learners by adapting student-centered learning (SCL) is more recommended than teacher-centered learning (TCL). Some teachers think that student-centered learning is easier to develop students' motivation in learning, such as encouraging the students to be more active (Garrett, 2008). Garret (2008) revealed that teacher-center learning creates the students to be more passive to engage in discussion in the classroom.

In student-centered learning, the function of a teacher is important such as delivering feedback to the students. Feedback is the appropriate steps to educate the students. This relates to Hattie and Timperley (2007). They argued that feedback is a step of the teachers to affect the students in their study and achievement. It also contributes a negative or positive effect for the students. Therefore, by giving feedback on students' activities, the teacher can understand where and which aspect must be developed step by step.

In setting up student-centered learning, in teaching writing to the students, there are many strategies, and weekly journal activity is an example. Based on Tuan (2010), weekly journal activity is a significant step to increase students' writing ability. The procedures of weekly journal activity in this study are by ordering the students to comprehend some journal articles or novels and instruct them to answer some questions provided by the teacher. Weekly journal activity adapts stimulating task to establish students' encouragement to read more particularly to give fundamental knowledge for the students on writing (Guthrie, et al., 2006).

Weekly journal activity is applied as an activity by some teachers at English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. Based on the observation after doing weekly journal activity at the English Education Department, feedback, which is done by the teacher, possesses important role to improve student's ability especially on the writing aspect. For example, the students will be aware of how to write correctly. Usually, after getting the feedback, the students have to read and check the suggestion of the teacher. They also are allowed to ask a question to the teacher if the feedback does not make sense. However, each teacher has diverse methods of giving feedback creating

different reactions to each student. That is why the main core of this study is to reveal what kinds of feedback students prefer and what students' reactions are after receiving the feedback in weekly journal activity.

From some classes at the English Education Department (EED) of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) adapting weekly journal activity as students' activity, most of the teachers use the feedback in students' work without giving additional feedback such as oral feedback. One of the teachers at the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta said that delivering oral feedback one by one to the students will spend too much time. The teachers revealed that giving feedback without delivering additional feedback, such as oral feedback, is a step to teach the students to be autonomous learners.

However, the language of the feedback that teachers write sometimes is mixed language such as using local language (Javanese language) where half of the students are from outside of Java and may not understand Javanese language. Sometimes, most of the students just put the feedback in their bag without reading and checking their errors. To sum up this, those students still get the same errors as previously.

Based on the background of this study, this study has two research questions.

- What are students' reactions toward feedback on weekly journal activity at the English Education Department of Unversitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta?

- What kind of feedback do the students English Education Department of Unversitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta prefer to receive for their writing on weekly journal activity?

The main point of this study is exploring students' reactions toward feedback on weekly journal activity used by the teacher at the English Education Department Unversitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. It is because the finding can help the teacher to reveal the psychology of the students after receiving feedback. Another point is to identify kinds of feedback preferred by the students on weekly journal activity.

Literature Review

There are many kinds of theory of feedback. According to Leibold (2015), he said that feedback is an ability of the teacher to comment on students' work. In this case, the teacher has to make a method of how to deliver an opinion to make the students

easier to get the point of what the teacher means. Hattie and Timperley (2007) also added the explanation of Leibold (2015). They revealed that feedback is such an activity of the teacher especially to send correct information or alternative strategy to the students.

Types of feedback used to criticize students' writing is a fundamental part to make the students understand the procedures of academic writing. This study concerns on written feedback which puts direct feedback to comment on students' work and oral feedback. Those feedback are written in this study as they are often used by the teacher in weekly journal activity especially at the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

Formative feedback is feedback trying to modify students' thinking and behavior by encouraging the students to participate in certain discussion (Shute, 2010). Shute (2010) argued that formative feedback should be no evaluative, supportive, specific, and timely. The step of formative feedback, the teacher gives an issue, then the students solve the case. Awe, Dixon, & Watson (2009) stated that students' participation will help the teacher to be responsive to identify what students need in the learning and teaching process.

Direct feedback is feedback which focuses on improving students' accuracy in learning a foreign language, but in this feedback, the teacher has been flexible to deliver students' project (Pham, 2015). Pham (2015) also stated that the feedback of the teacher must relate to students' proficiency. Giving feedback on writing and paying attention to grammar and accuracy are the most basic aspects that should be considered, such as "Rio eat banana" and the correct one is "Rio eats banana".

Diverse feedback or external feedback applies if the teacher wants to build up a self-directed learning model. Toro and Hurd (2013) said that the feedback should consist of relevant objective, understanding, responsibility, and self-confidence. The example of diverse feedback is the teacher transfers the main points of the material, and then the students look for the additional material on their own. To make sure the understanding of the students, the teacher tests them in the next meeting.

Ghani and Asgher (2012) explained that giving feedback to the students by applying a combination of teacher's feedback and peer feedback; it will give precious impact to the students in increasing students' knowledge. Peer- feedback will teach the students, who have low understanding, to identify, observe and

correct their work in the same way. The example of combination feedback is directing the students to create an essay, then the students must swap the work to their friends and comment. After doing those activities, the works are given to the teacher to obtain additional feedback from the teacher. That is the way peer feedback and teacher's feedback affect students' writing.

Oral feedback is feedback given to the students based on emotion and students' feeling, and this feedback should be conducted by peers (mendez and cruz, 2012). However, in delivering oral feedback, teacher is suggested to pay attention to some factors such as length of treatment and age (Saito, 2010). In this context, Saito (2010) said that the teacher must measure the effectiveness of the feedback which will be delivered orally since the longer feedback is delivered, the more risky the students forget what the teacher says.

Reactions of the students after receiving comments are diverse. Now and then, the response from one student to the others is different. Lee (2008) stated that to pay attention to the reaction of the students, usually the teacher put aside the students who have low proficiency, it goes without saying, the students will be difficult to catch the materials. The worst effect, the students have negative attitudes such as getting demotivation and ignoring the feedback. Moreover, another respond that students show after having feedback, according to Xuelian and Won (2014), the students are satisfied if corrective feedback is delivered to the students who have good proficiency.

There is no specific term about weekly journal activity. Thus, in this paper, this study compiles and cites some activities which are similar to weekly journal activity. The similar activities encompass of schemata theory, stimulating task, and reading comprehension. Schemata theory is designed for the students to practice how to arrange their paragraph (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Then, a weekly journal can be named as a stimulating task because the teacher also stimulates the students to give an argument, and criticize what they read. So that is why this method motivates the students to be more vigorous to participate in the discussion (Guthrie, 2006). Weekly journal activity can be nearly comparable to reading comprehension because of the procedures. For example, reading comprehension directs the students to answer questions based on what the students read (Eidswick, 2009).

Methodology

This research was qualitative research in which the data were gathered from six students batch of 2015 at the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta by using in-depth interviews. To calculate the data, this research was transcribed, then the data was put into the table. To obtain clear and valid data, this research was analyzed by using coding consisted of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. To make sure the data was valid, this research held a member-checking to the participants by making an appointment with a mobile phone, and the findings of the data were in line with what the participants argued.

Findings

After interviewing the students, this study found that the reactions of the students after receiving feedback consisted of three points. There were students showed demotivation in learning, students felt satisfied with the feedback, and students showed their enjoyment in learning. Those reactions came up because of several factors.

Alamis (2010) said that the students would be enthusiastic to learn if they got advice and suggestion in their work. Moreover, feedback gave a positive effect, if the students found the enjoyment inside the feedback such as a joke, funny word, or interesting delivering. All the findings above were supported by students' opinions below.

"I can laugh aloud and realize upon my mistakes due to the feedback. Moreover, the feedback make me easy to comprehend the correct form (Nana.2)".

Delivering feedback sometimes was the best step to make the students capable to improve their skills. However, based on Lee (2008) stated that feedback sometimes could be a barrier for the students to catch the materials. For example, the students got demotivated because of the suggestion of the teacher or the result beyond his/her expectation. Then, they also said that the characteristic of the teacher also determined student's reaction after receiving feedback. Moreover, giving uncompleted feedback was also disliked by them. This is one of the participants' arguments

"I do not like feedback which is uncomplete because it will make me confuse to understand the materials. (Nana.10)".

Based on Lipnevich and Smith (2008), they stated that students could have satisfaction in learning if the teacher took through the feedback clearly. First participant was happy to receive the feedback as the participant had a reference to improve the ability. This finding was

supported by one of the participants saying that

> "I am glad with feedback as when I make mistake, I feel so easy to find out a correct example. (Nini. 3)".

Based on the finding, the most favorite feedback to check their works are written feedback and oral feedback placed on the second rank. The reason why many students preferred to accept written feedback as the feedback made the students easy to identify their mistakes. According to Chandler (2003), giving feedback by underlining the errors of the students was the most suitable way to make the teacher easy to comment. Mahdi and Saadany (2013) said that oral feedback was effective to be used to give additional feedback after giving written feedback to the students. Mahdi and Saadany (2013) also explained that oral feedback was not proper to be given in front of many people because it can make the students shy. The participants in this study revealed that they like oral feedback since oral feedback was easy to ask for more feedback to the teacher.

Conclusion and Implication

To conclude this study, the students were sure that feedback from the teacher made the students enjoy learning certain materials. The second is the students also showed demotivation after getting feedback. The students stated that feedback made them demotivated in learning since the feedback was not appropriate to their expectations.

One of the findings found that feedback in the weekly journal activity gave them satisfaction on learning. Students argued that feedback given by the teacher facilitated them to increase their skills especially on writing as they had a reference showing their mistakes that should be improved. Furthermore, regarding types of favorite feedback of the students, there were two kinds of feedback preferred by the students, those are oral feedback and written feedback, but the most favorite feedback of the students was written feedback.

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