

# **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER FEEDBACK TECHNIQUE TOWARD STUDENTS WRITING ABILITY (AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY AT SMA MUHAMMADIYAH 2 METRO)**

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**Abstract:** The objective of this research are to examine whether: 1) there is a different between teacher feedback technique and conventional technique toward students' writing ability at the first grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro and 2) the effectiveness of Teacher Feedback Technique toward students' writing ability. This method applied in this research was a quasi experimental research. It was conducted at the first grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro. It consists of 90 students in three Classes. The sample of the research were two classes. Sampel penelitian ini adalah kelas X1 dan X2 yang dipilih menggunakan teknik cluster random sampling. The data were analyzed by using T-Test with Minitab Version 16 and Normalized Gain Test. Based on the result of data analysis, there are some research findings that can be drawn. They are; 1) there is a different between students' writing ability tough by using teacher feedback and conventional technique to the students of SMA Muhammadiyah Metro. Teacher feedback technique is more effective than conventional technique toward students writing ability. 2) the level of effectiveness of Teacher Feedback Technique is 0.32 (medium) and Conventional technique is 0.17 (low).

**Keywords:** Teacher Feedback, Writing Ability

## **INTRODUCTION**

The general aim of teaching English is to develop students' communicative competence of the four language skills or aspects of teaching and learning; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among the four language skills mentioned above, writing is one of essential parts to be able to communicate in target language. Writing also plays a very significant role in the success of learning. Therefore, it is not surprising in Indonesia that writing has been paid more attention to the government.

The attention of the government to the writing can be seen from our curriculum that puts a

strong emphasis in writing. Consequently, the basic competence of writing that should be learned by the students in senior high school is expressing the meaning in written functional text and write simple essay in form of procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, report, news item, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, spoof, explanation, discussion and review. Based on the basic competence that students have to master in senior high school, it indicates that students are expected to be able to write different text types.

Writing is a difficult activity for most students, both in the mother tongue and in a foreign language especially English. Murcia (2000:161) states that writing skill is often perceived as the most difficult skill since it requires a higher level of productive language control than other skills. It is no wonder that EFL students think that writing is a difficult skill to be mastered because it requires many aspects of language in its production such as organization, content, language use, mechanic and vocabulary. Moreover, writing is a complex process and commonly difficult for most people.

In line with this difficulty, Byrne (1997:4) underlines that there are three major problems that cause writing become a difficult activity. There are psychological problem, linguistic problem, and cognitive problem. Psychological problem is the essential of writing activity which is a solitary activity without the possibility of interaction or the benefit of feedback. It is different from speech which gets feedback from someone physically present. This makes writing become a hard activity to be required. The next problem related to linguistic problem is that the coherency, the choice of sentence structure and the way our sentences are linked together and sequenced. It is the hard steps to be implemented by the writers. The last problem related to the cognitive problem is the process of instruction in learning writing needing much effort. Such as learning the written form of the language, learning the certain structures which are less used in speech, and learning to organize the ideas in a well form of writing. Finally, writing can be said as a task which is often imposed on some people by the circumstances. This

not only has psychological effect in writing process, it is also caused a content problem which makes writing become more difficult to be acquired.

Compared to the other skills, writing is considered the most complicated one for the students to master. Students and teachers have long knowledge that learning to write in English is a complex process. In addition to linguistics problems, there are a lot of difficulties associated with written frameworks and rhetorical conventions. The ability to produce a good piece of writing is facilitated by the ability to write correct sentences and by the ability to connect sentences to present unified thought in written discourse. In short, students should master the rules and elements of writing to achieve successful communication in written language.

As mentioned before, there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for learner to master. To solve the problems and difficulties as mentioned above, English teachers are expected to be able to use an interesting technique. The teachers' techniques to teach writing are important factors that may affect the students' ability in writing. There are some kinds of techniques that can be applied by the English teachers to develop students' ability in writing. One of techniques that can be used in teaching writing is Teacher feedback.

Feedback is an advice, criticism or information about how good or useful something or somebody work is. Ur (1996: 242) defines feedback as information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of the learning task, usually with the objective of improving their performance.

Feedback is an important aspect to develop students' language awareness so that they can perform affectively in the writing classroom. In ESL teaching, feedback on students' writing is also judged as an important aspect. The goal of feedback is to teach skills that help students improve their writing proficiency to the point where they are cognizant of what is expected of them as writer and are able to produce it with minimal errors and maximum clarity. Feedback given to the students will make them realize and understand their deficiency in writing so that they can improve their writing.

Providing feedback is often seen as one of the ESL writing teacher's most important tasks (Hyland; 2003: 177). It indicates that feedback is an essential component of any English language writing course. Because teacher feedback is crucial factor in teaching writing, teacher feedback is an important technique to be studied and applied in teaching learning process. Therefore, the researcher did a research which title is The Effectiveness of Teacher Feedback Technique toward Students Writing Ability at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro.

Based on the problem background, the researcher formulate some research problem as below:

1. Is there any different between students' writing ability tough by using teacher feedback and conventional technique to the students of SMA Muhammadiyah metro.
2. How is the effectiveness of using Teacher Feedback Technique to teach writing to the students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro?

## **REVIEW OF RELATED TO LITERATURE**

There are several definitions of writing that explained by several experts. Byrne (1997: 1) stated that the purpose of writing is to produce the complete text. In his book, "Teaching Writing Skills", he propose that writing is an activity of producing a sequence of sentence arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways and it should be a coherent text. According to Spratt (2005: 26) writing is one of the four language skills that involve communicating a message (something to say) by making signs on a page. In addition, writing is activity in which learners form graphic symbols, arrange them to form words, and put the words in order and link them together in a certain way to produce a logical sequence of sentence (Hernowo, 2004: 43).

In line with those definition, Nunan (2003:88) defines that writing is the process of thinking to invent ideas, thinking about how to express into good writing, and arranging the ideas into statement and paragraph clearly. It indicates that the learners are expected to explore the ideas and make them into good paragraph. Moreover Nunan (1999:3) adds that successful writing involves mastering the mechanics of letter formation and obeying conventions of spelling and punctuation, using grammatical system to convey one's intended meaning, organizing content at the level of paragraph and the complete text to reflect given/ new information and selecting an appropriate style for one's audience.

From the definition of writing above, it can be concluded that writing is the way to produce the

language into written form in a sequence of sentence by combining the writing elements including control of content, spelling and punctuation, vocabulary, and integrating information into cohesive and coherent paragraph in order to make grammatical correct sentence for the purpose of communication.

Based on some theories of writing above, it can be summed up about the indicators that will be used in this research. They are:

1. The students are able to create and develop content of the text.
2. The students are able to arrange and organize the organization of the text correctly.
3. The students are able to write sentences of the text using language use (grammar) correctly.
4. The students are able to use the correct mechanics including punctuation, spelling and capitalization.
5. The students are able to use vocabulary appropriately in the text

### **Teacher Feedback**

Providing feedback is often seen as one of the ESL writing teacher's most important tasks (Hyland; 2003: 177). It indicates that feedback is an essential component of any English language writing course. In line with Hornby, Ur (1996: 242) defines feedback as information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of the learning task, usually with the objective of improving their performance. Moreover, according to Keh (1989: 18), feedback refers to any input when provides information for revision from reader to writer.

Teacher feedback is feedback on students writing given by their teacher. Teacher feedback in this study is focused on teacher written feedback that is proposed by Hyland (2003:167).

According to Srichanyachon (2012: 8) teacher written feedback or handwritten commentary is a primary technique to respond to students' essays to assist students' writing development; teacher written comments on the students' drafts indicate problems and make suggestion for improvement of future papers. Through feedback teachers can help students compare their own performance with the ideal and to diagnose their own strengths and weaknesses.

Teacher written feedback should respond to all aspect of students' texts:

structure, organization, style, content and presentation (Hyland; 2003: 185). The teachers as source of feedback have to focus their feedback in order to improve students writing. According to Hyland (2003: 3-18) six main focuses of feedback are focus on language structures, focus on text functions, focus on creative expression, focus on writing process, focus on tent and lastly focus on genre. He adds that feedback points in writing include symbols and marks in the margins, underlining of problems, and complete corrections, as well as more detailed comment and suggestions. This statement implies that the students have to pay more attention on all aspect of the text.

Moreover, Hyland (2003: 185) states that the form of teacher feedback can be praise, criticism, and suggestion. Praising encourages the

reoccurrence of appropriate language behaviors where the students are accredited for some characteristics, attributes, or skill. Spear in Zainurrahman (2010: 9) mentions that encouraging students to make praising comments like “that is a good idea”; I really like the way you said that”. Therefore, teacher need to use positive comment with care, but a lack of positive comments can affect both students’ attitudes to writing and their reception of feedback.

Suggestion and criticism can be seen as opposite ends of continuum ranging from a focus on what is done poorly to measures for its improvement, so while criticism is negative comment on a text, suggestions contain a retrievable plan or action for improvement. Below some example of suggestion and criticism proposed by Hyland (2003: 189). They are: (1) try to express your ideas as simple as possible and give extra information; (2) this conclusion is all a bit vague. I think it would be better to clearly state your conclusions with the brief reason; (3) this is a very sudden start. You need a more general statement to introduce the topic. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that teacher written feedback have to provide praise, criticism and suggestion that focus on language structure, text functions, creative expression, writing process, content and genre.

In applying this technique, below are the procedure of doing feedback by the teacher proposed by Byrne (1997: 124-126)

1. Students submit their writing draft to get feedback from the teacher.

2. Teacher reads students’ draft carefully in order to look for students’ errors and mistakes on their draft.
3. Teacher underlines the errors or mistakes and diagnoses it by writing the appropriate symbol in the margin (marginal feedback) or correcting symbol.
4. Teacher gives comment, criticism and suggestion on students’ draft (endnote feedback) in order to explain their errors, mistakes, weaknesses and strengths.
5. Teacher returns the students’ draft and let them identify and correct their own mistakes based on the teacher feedback.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research method used for this research was an experimental study. Experimental research is a research in which the researcher manipulates the independent variable. As stated by Johnson and Christensen (2000: 23), the purpose of experimental research is to determine cause-and-effect relationships. It means that the purpose of an experimental study is to investigate the correlation between cause and effect and how far its correlation is by giving certain treatment to experimental class and to control class as the comparison.

The population of this study is all of the tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro. The total numbers of the population are 90 students divided into 3 classes. The writer used two classes which are randomly selected. The sampling technique applied in this study was the design of the research was

*Nonequivalent pretest-posttest control group design.*

$$g = \frac{T_2 - T_1}{T_2 - T_1} \cdot X$$

Notes:

T1 : Pre test of experimental and control class

T2 : Posttest of experimental and control class

X : Treatment by using Teacher Feedback

### Data Collecting Technique

To know the students writing abilities, the students were given writing test which is in the form of Descriptive Text. The researcher gave the test through *free writing* where the students were asked to write based on the certain topic that was decided by the researcher. The researcher evaluated the writing test through some aspects, such as: content, organization, vocabulary, language use (grammar), and mechanics. The test was conducted in initial (before treatment) and final (after treatment).

### Data Analysis Technique

#### 1. Different Mean (T-Test)

To examine the effectiveness of using Teacher Feedback Technique toward students writing ability based on the result of Pretest and Posttest data, the researcher used independent T-Test with software of Minitab version 16.

#### 2. Gain Test

To know how effective of using Teacher feedback toward students' writing ability, the researcher uses Normalization Gain (*N-Gain*) which is proposed by Meltzer (2002:183)

= with formula:-

$$g = \frac{\text{skor posttest} - \text{skor pretest}}{\text{skor ideal} - \text{skor pretest}}$$

Gain (*N-Gain*) which is proposed by Meltzer (2002:183) with formula:  
software *Minitab* of T-test by using  
Two-sample T for Ex.Post vs Con.Post N Mean StDev SE Mean  
30 7

The result of N-Gain is calculated with the 3 scales of N-Gain index (low, average and high) according to Meltzer (2002:184) there are three scales of N-Gain index. They are:

Table 1. N-Gain Index

Nilai g	Interpretasi
$0.7 < g < 1$	High
$0.3 \leq g \leq 0.7$	Average
$0 < g < 0.3$	Low

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Hypothesis Testing

To examine the hypothesis and to know the effectiveness of Teacher Feedback Technique toward students writing ability after giving the treatment, the researcher used different mean test (T-Test) with hypotheses below:

H<sub>0</sub> : There is no difference between students' writing ability taught by using Teacher feedback and conventional technique to the students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro

H<sub>1</sub> : There is a difference between students' writing ability taught by using Teacher feedback and conventional technique to the students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro

### Independent T Test

After examining the normality and homogeneity test, to answer the problem formulation, the researcher used different mean test (T-Test) with software *Minitab 16*. Below is the result of T-test by using *Minitab 16*.

Two-sample T for Ex.Post vs Con.Post N Mean StDev SE Mean

Ex.Post 30 74.23 5.72 1.0  
 Con.Post 30 69.37 5.30 0.97

Difference =  $\mu$  (Ex.Post) -  $\mu$  (Con.Post)  
 Estimate for difference: 4.87  
 95% CI for difference: (2.02, 7.72) T-Test of difference = 0 (vs not =):

**T-Value = 3.42 P-Value = 0.001**  
 DF = 58

Both use Pooled StDev = 5.5123

Based on the result of T-test using Minitab 16 above, there are some results which can be explained. The mean of experiment group is 74.23 and standard deviation is 5.72. the mean of control group is 69.73 with standard deviation is 5.30. We can see that the mean score of experiment class is higher than control class with difference point 4.87.

To know more whether the difference between experimental class and control class is statistically significant or not, the researcher used Independent T Test with different sample. The result of T-Test shows that *Tcount* is 3.42 in degree of freedom 58 and P-Value is 0.001 lower than 0.05. Because P-Value is lower than 0.05, The null hypothesis is rejected. It means than there is a difference between students' writing ability taught by using Teacher feedback and conventional technique to the students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro.

#### **Normalized Gain Test (N-Gain)**

Improvement (gain) is obtained from the difference between pre-test and post-test. To know the effectiveness of using Teacher Feedback Technique in

experimental class and Conventional Technique in control was used Normalized Gain Test. The result of Normalized Gain (G) test can be seen on table 2.

*Table 2. Result of Gain Test*

Class	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Gain	<g>	Criteria
Experim ent	62.13	74.23	12.10	0.32	Average
Control	63.27	69.37	6.10	0.17	Low

Based on the result of Normalized Gain (G) in table 2 we can see that in experimental class the score of G is 0.32 (Average) and in control class the score of G is 0.7 (Low). After showing the score and criteria of N-gain test it can be conclude that the effectiveness of using Teacher Feedback Technique is in the level of average and the effectiveness of using Conventional technique is in the low level.

After comparing the score of N-gain between control class and experimental class, it can be concluded that there is a different improvement between control class and experimental class. It indicates that Teacher feedback technique is more effective to improve students' writing ability.

#### **Discussion**

Based on the result of Independent T test and Normalized Gain Test, there are several conclusion can be drawn in this research. They are:

*The difference between students' writing ability taught by using Teacher Feedback Technique and Conventional Technique.*

The different effect toward students' writing ability taught by using Teacher Feedback and Conventional can be seen from the

result of T Test. The result of Independent T-Test shows that there is a significant difference between students' writing ability taught by using Teacher Feedback and those who are taught by using conventional technique.

Feedback on students writing is an important aspect to develop students' language awareness and it is often seen as one of the ESL writing teacher's most important tasks (Hyland; 2003: 70). It will make the students realize and understand their deficiency in writing so that they can improve their writing.

Feedback will make students understand and aware to their deficiencies in writing so they can improve their writing ability. According to Srichanyachon (2012: 8) through feedback teacher can help students compare their own performance with the ideal and to diagnose their own strengths and weaknesses. Harmer (2001: 99) states that feedback encompasses not only correcting students, but also offering them an assessment of how well they have done. It means that the feedback from the teacher non only guide the students but also motivate them to be better in writing. Teacher feedback gives the students opportunities to develop the quality of their next draft.

#### *The Effectiveness of Teacher Feedback toward students' writing ability.*

Based on the result of N-Gain test for Experiment and control class shows that there is a difference in the level of effectiveness where the effectiveness of using Teacher Feedback technique is in the average

level and Conventional technique is in the low level. It can be concluded that Teacher feedback technique is effective to improve students' writing ability.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of data analysis the research formulates two conclusions. They are:

1. There is a difference between students writing ability taught by using Teacher Feedback technique and those who is taught by using Conventional technique.
2. The effectiveness of using Teacher Feedback Technique is in average level with score 0.32.

Based on the finding and discussion, it can be concluded that Teacher Feedback Technique is effective to improve students writing ability especially for students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Metro.

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