

# **THE FOCUSES OF TEACHER'S WRITTEN FEEDBACK ON STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT THE TENTH GRADE OF SMAN 1 TANAH JAWA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study was aimed at finding out the teacher written feedback focuses and purpose on students writing descriptive text at SMA Negeri 1 Tanah Jawa. This study used descriptive qualitative research design. The participants of this study were an English teacher and 36 students grade X of SMA Negeri 1 Tanah Jawa. In this research, the data source was the students' descriptive text writing. It was collected after their writing was given written feedback by the teacher. The instruments for collecting data were documentation and interview. There are six focuses on teacher written feedback. The focuses are language form, text functions, content, creative expression, the writing process, and genre. Based on the analysis of the students' writing, it is figured out that the teacher's written feedback mostly focuses on language form namely grammar. Based on the interview, from six purposes namely provides information for both teacher and students, provides advice to the students, provides students language input, motivates the students, and leads students toward autonomy, the result showed that the teacher has been fulfilled all those purposes of written feedback.

**Keywords:** *Teacher Written Feedback*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of Study**

Writing is needed as one of the form of communication. People can express their ideas, opinions, experiences, feeling, and information through writing. People meet and communicate for particular purpose, when they communicate they not only use spoken language but also written language. This skill is extremely needed in daily life because our activity can not separated from the writing for instance chatting, taking note, sending a letter, writing a shopping list, etc.

Harmer (2007: 31) states that writing is a way to produce language and express idea, feeling and opinion. It means that the main purpose of writing is for communication. Through writing, people can express or delivering their thought, feelings, ideas, experiences, to tell a specific purpose to the people in form of sentences or a paragraph into a text.

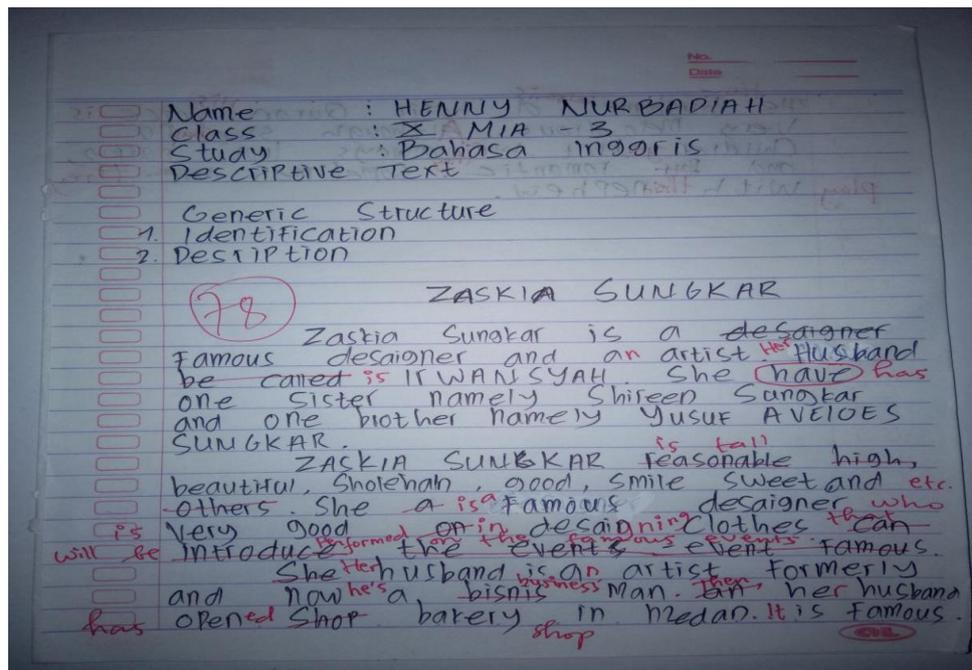
Writing is one of four language skills which have to be mastered by the students, beside listening, speaking, and reading. Writing is an important skill for students in learning English. Pardiyono (2007) states that writing is a linguistic competence that is expressed in written form. Writing is one of the ways for human to express and share idea, thoughts, or experiences with others in the form of written language, so people may write for many different purposes.

Feedback has long been regarded as assential for the development of second language (L2) writing skill, both for its potential for learning and for student motivation. Based on Hattie and Timperley's (2007), feedback can be defined as "information provided by an agent with respect to one's performance or understanding". It means that the teacher, who is the agent providing feedback, must not only be evaluative when providing information on performance and understanding but must also provide paths to redirect thinking, encourage ongoing knowledge acquisition, and prompt students to become evaluative and critical of their own work in hopes that they will correct or improve themselves.

In Curriculum 213 as a standard of education system, the students of Senior High School are assessed to a write a text. Based on the syllabus of Curriculum 2013, there are several standard competencies that should be reached by students. One of the standard competencies itself is the students should be able to describe a person. Therefore, even though there are several kinds of texts that students need to master, but in this research

will focus only one text. One of the texts is a descriptive text. Pardiyono (2007) states that Descriptive text is a text which describe a living or non-living things.

The researcher found out how the English teacher gave the written feedback on students' writing descriptive text of the tenth grade at SMAN 1 Tanah Jawa.



For example: 'She a famous desaigner very good on desain clothes can introduce the events-event famous.'

As the fact above, it can be concluded that teacher only focus to words which are not appropriate. Whereas written feedback has important roles to improve students' writing skill. Teacher is suppose to be a more immersive in giving written feedback. Those are the reason why the writer would like to conduct the research under the title "The Focuses of Teacher's Written Feedback on Students'Descriptive Text at the Tenth Grade of SMAN 1 Tanah Jawa"

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 1. Writing

#### a. Definition of Writing

Spratt et al (2005:26) state that writing is one of the productive language skills which deals with conveying messages with the use of graphic symbols. Richard and Renadya (2002:303) state that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners. There are six common problems that may occur when doing writing. Those problem are capitalization problem, punctuation problem, inexplicitness or fuzziness, poor organization or illogical sequence, spelling problem, and the last is grammatical errors (Msanjila, 2005).

### **b. The Process of Writing**

Writing is one of the activity that have a steps. Writing process is done through some stages. On each stage, students engage in a certain activity to construct their writing. According to Harmer (2004:4-5) writing process in a stage that the writer goes throuh in order to produce something in final wrieten form. There are four steps in writing process based on Harmer (2004:4-5), namely planning, drafting, editing (reflecting and revising), and final draft (final version)

Writing process is the study and practice to improve this skill. Writing is not about a product or result but writing is about process, process that follow each steps and practice by writing often, it is also will make writing easier.

### **c. Genre of Writing**

Pardiyono (2007) explain eleven types or genre of text, namely: Descriptive, Recount, Narrative, Procedure, Explanation, Discussion, Exposition, News Item, Report, Anecdot and Review. Each texts has its own function and generic structure.

## **2. Descriptive Text**

### **a. Definition**

Descriptive text is one of the texts that are taught at Senior High School. Pardiyo (2007) states that Descriptive text is a text which describe a living or non-living things. It can be concluded that descriptive text is a text to describe person, place or thing by visual experience. It is used to create a visual image of people, place, even of time days or season. It may also be used to describe the outwards appearance people. It may tells about their traits of character and personality.

### **b. Social Function**

Description is a type of written text, which has the specific function to give description about an object (human or non human).

### **c. Generic Structure**

Pardiyo (2007) states that the Generic Structure of descriptive writing are :

1. Identification : This is a statement that contains one topic of discussion object that will be described.
2. Description : It contains detailed description of the object in question in the identification.

### **3. Feedback**

Feedback is as a source of information about the students' strengths and weaknesses on their writing to do improvement. Nation (2009: 115) states that feedback is an important way of encouraging students to keep their goals in mind. Therefore, students should be provided with feedback about the effectiveness of their writing so that the students can carry on the idea of their writing. Feedback is crucial for encouraging and consolidating learning and it is also regarded as an essential factor in the writing context. Feedback can be used as a way to respond to students' writing to help them enhance their written skills.

Harmer (2007: 148) mentions some techniques that are used in giving feedback to students' writing. The techniques are as follows :

a) Responding

Responding to the students' work can be considered as an attempt to give feedback on their writings. The response on the students' work can be used to motivate them rather than assessing or evaluating.

b) Correcting

Some teachers use codes and put them in the body of the writing itself, or in a corresponding margin. This makes the correction much neater, less threatening, and considerably more helpful than random marks or comments. Frequently, the use of symbols as indirect feedback on students' writing refers to the students' errors, such as word order, spelling, or verb tense.

c) Involving students

Feedback on writer work does not only come from teachers. The teachers can also encourage students to give feedback to each other. It has a positive effect on group cohesion.

#### **4. The Teacher Written Feedback Focuses**

These different types of teacher written feedback can have different focuses. Hyland (2003) talks about six major focuses of teacher written feedback:

1. Focus on language form

Focus on language structures, as Hyland explains , implies teachers' emphasis on checking students' vocabulary choices, syntactic patterns, and mechanics.

## 2. Focus on text functions

The aim of this focus is to help students develop effective paragraphs through the creation of topic sentence, supporting sentences, and transitions, and to develop different types of paragraphs.

## 3. Focus on content

When teachers focus on content, they are concentrating on students' ideas and information.

## 4. Focus on creative expression

In focusing on creative expressions, teachers are focusing on students' personal styles of writing and individual ideas.

## 5. Focus on the writing process

Focusing on the writing process means focusing on how students first plan the essay, define a rhetorical problem, and then present solutions.

## 6. Focus on genre

The final focus is on genre. This focus, according to Hyland (2003), is very important in order to teach students how to achieve some communicative purposes when they write.

## **5. Purposes of Feedback**

Lewis (2002) states that feedback is like the way telling the students about the progress they are making and also facilitating them in the area of improvement. Further, Lewis has listed some of the research based purposes that have been suggested for giving feedback in the language class.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research used descriptive qualitative method to answer the research problem proposed in which the data were in the form of teacher written feedback on students writing descriptive text, by collecting, analyzing the data and drawing conclusion based on the data analysis. Creswell (2012: 16) state that the characteristic of qualitative research is analyzing the data for description and themes using text analyzing and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings. Further, he states that the researcher can analyze words or pictures to describe the central phenomenon under study. It can be said that in qualitative research, the data can be analyzed and described by using words, sentences, or pictures as the representations in finding out the results of the research.

The data will be analyzed by calssifying focuses of teacher written feedback in students' writing descriptive text. After that, finding out the purposes of written feedback which teacher give in students' writing descriptive text.

### **Techniques of Analyzing Data**

To get the result, the total number of teacher written feedback on students' writing descriptive text were calculated. Then, how many written feedbacks focus on language form, text functions, content, creative expression, the writing process, and genre were calculated. The last step was counting the percentage of each focuses of written feedback.

To find out the purposes of teacher written feedback on students' writing descriptive text, the researcher did interview with the English teacher and recorded it. The findings were

then related to five purposes of feedback stated by Lewis' theory. They are providing information for both teacher and students, providing students with advice about learning, providing students with language input, motivating the students, and leading students toward autonomy.

## RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Research Finding

The data of the teacher written feedback focuses on students' writing descriptive text are presented below.

**Table 4.1 Teacher Written Feedback Focuses**

No	Written Feedback Focuses	Total	Percentage (%)
1.	Language form		
	a. Grammar	213	81.6
	b. Vocabulary	35	13.4
	c. Punctuation	13	4.9
2.	Text Function	-	
3.	Content	-	
4.	Creative Expression	-	
5.	Writing Process	-	
6.	Genre	1	0.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.1 shows that 81.6% of the teacher written feedback focuses on grammar, 13.4% on vocabulary, 4.9% on punctuation, and 0.3% on genre. Teacher written feedback is mostly about language form as it has the biggest percentage. In summary, 99.9% of teacher written feedback focus on language form and 0.3% focus on genre.

Genre is the lowest with 0.3% because the data of focus on genre was gotten when the researcher did interview with the teacher about descriptive text. From the ten questions, only one question the teacher told about genre. So, the data for genre only one data. From the

analysis which researcher did, it can be concluded that the teacher dominantly focuses on language form.

Based on the interviewed result, it can be concluded that teacher had been fulfilled all the purposes of written feedback based on the Lewis' theory. It means, the written feedback which given by the teacher provided information, advised about learning, language input, motivation, and also lead students towards autonomy.

### **Discussion**

The researcher analyzed two research problems. The first problem is analyzing teacher written feedback focuses. There are six focuses, those are language form, text function, content, creative expression, the writing process, and genre. In this study, a teacher was involved as a participant. From students' document which had been given written feedback, showed that 81.6% of the teachers' written feedback focuses on grammar, 13.4% on vocabulary, 4.9% on punctuation. In summary, 100% of teacher's written feedback focus on language form. However, from the interview which the researcher did, it showed that the teacher not only focus on language form but also focus on genre.

From that result, it can be compared to the research which was conducted by Agbayahoun (2016) entitled 'Teacher Written Feedback on Student Writing: Teachers' and Learners' Perspectives'. This study employed quantitative and qualitative research instruments. In his research, he involved two teacher. They are Paula and Mike. The result in this research are Paula provided written feedback on 68 written texts that she marked. A total of 795 feedback points were collected from those marked texts yielding an average of 11.69 feedback point per student text. Her feedback is 100% form-focused as it is concerned with errors related to the clarity of ideas and to the accurate use of language (grammar, word choice, word order,

and spelling). Paula's error feedback strategies consist in underlining and circling errors as well as in providing correction of some of them.

The result of Agbayahoun's research is the highest teacher focuses is on language form. When teachers gave written feedback to students, the first thing teachers did were focused on the language form. Such as, grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation.

The second problem, that is analyzing teacher feedback purposes. It can be compared to the research which was conducted by Anggraeni (2012). The research entitled 'The Characteristics of Teacher's Feedback in The Speaking Activities of The Grade Nine Students of SMP N 2 Depok'. The differences of this research to find out the purposes of teacher in giving feedback to the students, in this study the interview was conducted on one teacher only but in Anggraeni's research, interview was conducted with teacher and some students. It is also inferred from students' opinion toward some statements implying the purpose of teacher's feedback in the questionnaire.

The similarity of both in this study and Anggraeni's research, teacher had been fulfilled all the purposes of written feedback. Such as, give provided information, advised about learning, language input, motivation, and also lead students towards autonomy. The teacher feedback supported the students in their writing and speaking. It made them know their error and the correct one. It also motivated and encouraged students improve their writing and speaking. Most of the students followed the teacher's feedback.

It can be concluded that the purposes of teacher feedback was very useful both in speaking and writing. The students learned grammar and vocabulary from their teacher feedback. By having teacher feedback, the students would become aware of their error and they are expected would not repeat the same error because they already known the correct one. So, their speaking or writing ability could be better.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### A. Conclusion

There are two main research questions to be answered in this study. The first research question is about the focuses of teacher written feedback in writing descriptive text and the purposes of teacher written feedback in writing descriptive text.

Based on the data and data analysis in the previous chapter, the following conclusions are drawn :

1. The focuses of teacher written feedback on students' writing descriptive text are language form like grammar and vocabulary.
2. There are five purposes of teacher written feedback, namely: provided information, advised about learning, language input, motivation, and also lead students towards autonomy.

### B. Suggestions

This part presents some suggestions that will hopefully give a new idea to provide better teaching and learning process in Senior High School. The first suggestion is intended for the teachers who are competent to create good atmosphere to facilitate learning process. The second suggestion is for students who are interested in improving their writing skill. The last suggestion is for the further researchers which can be done related to this study, particularly in the area of feedback in writing.

#### 1. To English Teachers

- In providing written feedback , the teacher should be able to cover six focuses. Focus on language form and genre is important , but the students' writing can

be better if the teacher also focus on the other aspects, such as focus on text functions, content, creative expression, and the writing process.

- Not only in the form correction, the teacher can improve their written feedback by giving the praise or symbol on students writing.

## **2. To Students**

- The students should be active to write and revise their writing. They should really employ the teacher written feedback.
- The student should be cooperative in developig their writings. It can be achieved by incorporating other sources and by having conferences with their teachers to revise their writings.

## **3. To Other Researchers**

- In this study, the researcher observed writing activities in 2 times, because of the limited time. Other researchers may follow up this study in longer time in order to find more data so that the result will be more satisfactory and representative.
- One of the result of this research is that teachers' written feedback encourages and motivates the students to revise their writings. Other researchers can also invistigate the relationship of encouragement provided by teachers' written feedback and the improvement of students' writings.

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