STUDENTS' RESPONSES IN ONLINE PEER FEEDBACK IN EFL WRITING INSTRUCTION

by Nanik Sri Rahayu

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Abstract:

As a supplementary of teacher's feedback, peer feedback activity is believed can help the students improve their writing achievement. During and after the pandemic, teachers often applied online teaching for certain reasons, including in practicing peer feedback which can be done via different application. This study aims at investigating the types of comments appeared when the students conduct peer feedback in quip application. The study involved a class in which the teacher applied peer feedback via quip. This research is a descriptive quantitative in which the data was collected through documentation. The students' responses were analyzed using types of comments proposed by Jun Liu and Hansen. The result of the study showed that the students made a lot of comments during online peer feedback activity. This study demonstrates that students are very active in giving comments during online peer feedback; however, it also underlines that the students still produced many local and non-revision comments.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of teaching writing in university in EFL setting (Indonesia) is to make the students to be able to produce a good text.

However this may not be easy for the teachers due to challenge in the field (Suwantaratip, 2014). Producing a good text is not always easy for the students, especially for EFL learners. Translating the students' ideas into the target language may be difficult due to the different between the target and the native language rule exist. They may encounter several problems related to the text itself and the language in which they have to express their ideas. Toba et all states that although Indonesian students' writing achievement is good, they still face problems in both in the writing aspect itself and in their personal problems such as limited writing practice, writing anxiety, negative perspective on writing itself, dislike in writing, low motivation in writing, and insufficient time for teaching writing process (Toba, 2019).

Peer feedback, as one teaching strategy in teaching writing besides teacher feedback and self-feedback, can be beneficial both for the students and the teacher. For the students, peer feedback can promote students' awareness in writing. When the student reads and criticizes their friends' works, automatically he/she will also learn and be more critical for his own writing. Meanwhile, when he receives his friends; comments, he will also read and revise his own writing (Rollinson 2005). This situation can stimulate their curiosity in deciding and explaining whether his peer's work is already on the right track or not. Learning from assessing their peers' work demands the students' responsibility as they have to provide the reasons from their action. In other words, peer feedback makes the students better understanding of their writing ability (Rouhi & Azizian, 2013). In addition, mastering writing can be a challenging task for EFL students so that they need to share their experience to seek for the insight from their peers. In this case, sharing and learning form their peer, can lessen the students' tension compared when they have to ask for their teacher help. This sharing session can also promotes foster the development of the other language skills and build writer's self confidence (Widiati, 2003).

Although this Peer feedback is beneficial both for the receiver but also for the giver as well, the providing and the receiving feedback leas to the same improvement (Huisman, 2018). In some cases, the sender can have more benefit than the giver (Baker, 2017). In conducting peer feedback, students are grouped in pair, three, or four. Although they work in groups, they still can learn and improve their writing through the sharing impact. Peer feedback is not only beneficial for individual but also the group as well (Alzubei, 2017).

For the teachers, peer feedback can help them decrease their workload during the teaching and learning process. As we know that the teaching of writing demands the teacher's time to read, check, and correct the students' work. This situation can be skipped by the teacher when they do not have enough energy to do so. As the result, the teaching of writing can lead to a product approach than process approach. Meanwhile, the students are waiting and hoping the result of their teacher comments for their work. In addition, the large class size in EFL setting often discourages teachers from assigning enough teacher feedback for learners and causes the teachers not to notice their error. When conducted effectively, peer feedback can have the same value as the teacher feedback for the students. Compared to peer feedback, teacher feedback has no significant different effect on students' writing achievement although the teacher gives long comments with more specific explanation (Harmer, J, 2015). Therefore, peer feedback gives new insight in effective teaching writing in EFL context.

Based on the phenomena above, peer feedback is believed to be one of the most effective strategies in EFL writing instruction. Such a study may have potential to contribute to knowledge, research and pedagogy related to EFL writing instruction especially those regarding to peer feedback. In this study, the writer will focus on the types of comments that the students make in online peer feedback. Investigating the students' comments is considered important since these comments

can reflect what is truly happening during the process of peer feedback. Knowing its' type can inform the teacher whether their comments have been useful for their peers to help them improve their writing quality. Finally, the present study is aimed at investigating the implementation of online peer feedback in EFL in writing instruction focusing on the type of students' comments. Therefore, this descriptive study aims at answering this single question: what types of comments do the students make when they conduct online peer feedback?

Literature review

Online peer feedback has been a new trend in during and after the pandemic situation. Students at the present time are gen Z generation in which they are digital native so that internet-based application is their daily live in completing their task and assignment, including in conducting peer feedback. Online peer feedback is more effective than offline one (Jongsma, 2022). In online peer feedback students can have more flexible time but in different atmosphere with several benefits for the students' writing improvement. The students who have online peer feedback via google docs gained better result than those conducted peer feedback in face to face format. In addition, students also have positive attitude and experienced a high collaboration through google docs peer feedback (Suwantarathip, 2014).

Further, students in Iran also have positive perception on the impact of online peer feedback on their academic writing skill (Ebadi 2017, Putra 2021). Online peer feedback in google docs has effective role in improving students' writing skill (Zeyyedrezaie, 2016). It also provides several benefits for the students such as; the provider will get potential learning benefit and students can use different cognitive process (Van pop Ta 2017). In addition, Online peer feedback has significant effect than face to face one (Pham, 2020).

Types of Per feedback Response

Students' comments can be categorized in different methods. Liu and Hansen categorize students' comments in peer feedback into three types. The first type is based on areas where students' comments were classified into global and local comments. A global comment refers to idea development, audience and purpose, and organization of writing while a local comment refers to the comment which does not influence in the sentence level but on the overall of the text. This comment usually focuses on grammar, style and editing matters. Based on its nature, each category is divided into two types, revision and non-revision-oriented comments. Revision-oriented comments are comments which indicate reviewers' intention of asking for troublesome revision or comments related to the content of the text while non revision oriented are comments which are irrelevant to make suggestion for revision. It does not have any relationship with the content of the text such as editing matters.

In addition, based on its types, students' comments are classified into 4 categories, those are; evaluation, clarification, suggestion, and alteration. Evaluation is comments about reviewers' judgment whether the text is good or bad based on the feature of writing. Clarification comments are comment which search for explanation and justification. Suggestion comments are comments which indicate the direction for change or clue for revision. Finally, alteration comments refer to comments which provide specific changes. In short, although based on these three classifications (areas, nature, and types of reply), there should be 16 possible types for students' comments; however, there are only 12 categories for them. Those are; Evaluation Global Revision (EGR), Evaluation Global Non-Revision (EGN), Evaluation Local Revision (ELR), Evaluation Local Non-Revision (ELN), Clarification Global Revision (CGR), Clarification Local Revision (CLR), Suggestion Global Revision (SGR), Suggestion Global Non-

Revision (SGN), Suggestion Local Revision (SLR), Suggestion Local Non-Revision (SLN), Alteration Global Revision (AGR), Alteration Local Revision (ALR).

METHOD

This aim of this study is to describe the types of comments that the students make during the online peer feedback using quip application; therefore, descriptive quantitative design is considered appropriate for the purpose of the study (Ary, 2010). The data of this study is gained from documentation of the students' comments in online peer feedback. The data were all students' comments in giving respond for their friends' works. This study employed a writing class in which the teacher applies online peer feedback using quip application. The class consist of 25 students in which the teacher divided them into several groups in 4 students.

Before conducting online peer feedback (giving comments), the teacher gave some tutorials on how to work with quip application and some instruction on how to give the comments. The peer feedback was conducted after the first draft. The teacher provided a week to have online peer feedback by after the face to face tutorial class. Then, the comments were identified and classified into certain codes representing areas (global vs local), nature (revision, non-revision), and types of reply (evaluation, clarification, suggestion, and alteration) proposed by Jun Liu and Hansen (Jun Liu and Jette G Hansen, 2005)

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of study, the total of the comments made by the students during peer feedback were 567 comments. Then these comments were classified based on the categorization proposed by Jun Liu and Hansen. The result is as follows:

1. Areas

The result of the analysis is presented in the following table :

Table 1. Occurrence and Percentage of Students' Comments in the terms of Areas

No	Comments	Occurrence	Percentage
1.	Global	141	25 %
2.	Local	426	75 %
	Total	567	100%

The result of finding above shows that in online peer feedback, the total number of appeared comments were 567 comments. In terms of global aspects there were 141 occurrence (25%) and local aspects 426 (75%).

Below is the example of comment in global areas:

"according to me, the thesis statement is not really bad but since the online transportation has been…..(GC1).

You have a jump idea in this sentence..(GDG3)

The two examples above are categorized as global comments because they affect the whole text. When they were changed into the correct forms, automatically it will change all content of the text.

The following are examples for local comments.

Delete 'the" (GDL1)

Replace "today" with "now"(GDL3)

The two examples above are categorized as local comments because they affect the only in that part of the paragraph. It doesn't affect the entire text.

2. Nature

The second type of comments in this study is about the nature and the result of the analysis is presented in the following table :

Table 2. Occurrence and Percentage of Students' Comments in the terms of Nature

No	Comments	Occurrence	Percentage
1.	Revision oriented	160	28 %
2.	Non-revision oriented	407	72%
	Total	567	100%

The result of finding above shows that the total number of comments in term of the nature in online peer feedback was 567 comments in which 160 (28%) comments belongs to revision oriented and 407 (72%) belongs to non-revision oriented.

The following examples below describe revision-oriented comments.

> *....you might change it with "Islamic boarding school bring up a great relationship with other people, having a good knowledge, and character's building (CR1).*
>
> *...add something to specific it. For example number and point.*
>
> *1.   Bla blab bla social*
> *2.   Bla blab bla cultural*
> *3.   Bla blab la educational (GDR1)*

The above examples belong to revision-oriented comments because they are about the content of the text. To revise the errors, the students need to confirm their background knowledge on the topic. It is nothing to do with the linguistic aspect.

The following are examples of non-revision oriented comments.

> *Your third paragraph is too difficult to understand (GDNR1)*
>
> *Any is used for negative sentence, this is not effective (GDN2)*

These two above sentences are non revision-oriented comments because the reason why a sentence is difficult to understand lies on the use of vocabulary, or transition signal. Therefore, it does not relate to the content of the text. The second example is also about effective and

non effective sentence. It relates to grammar only. They don't relate to the content of the text.

3. Types

Based on its types, there are four kinds of comments and the result of analysis of the study can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Occurrence and Percentage of Students' Comments in the terms of Types

No	Comments	Occurrence	Percentage
1.	Evaluation	246	43%
2.	Clarification	16	3 %
3.	Suggestion	224	40 %
4.	Alteration	81	14 %
	Total	567	100%

a. The following example are evaluation comments

...The second paragraph is less balance in the number of words with another paragraph body. It is too long (EGDE2).

b. *The following example shows clarification comments::*

Can we get this sentence to be transitional sentence?(GDC1)

It means the real of life? (GDC2)

These two examples above are clarification comments because the sender of the comments is proposing questions which need the answer. He/she needs some explanation or confirmation because he/she got difficulties in understanding them.

c. *The following examples are suggestion comments:*

It will be better if the hook is orientation to attract the reader (CS1)

I think you must delete it because it word waste (GDS1)

These two examples above are suggestions because the commentator offer the solution for the problems. In addition, the commentator didn't supply for the answer. It is only the clue and it is a choice. It means that the students may receive it or reject it.

d. The following are examples of alteration:

Delete "many"(AGD1)

....therefore the corruptor should be given death penalty considering some reasons:

Death penalty offers effective solution

Death penalty will reduce the amount of corruption

The corruptors deserve to die (AC1)

The above examples are alteration because the commentator provides the answer for the problems. The solution is not in the form of clue, but a specific answer regarding to the problem.

Table 4. Occurrence and Percentage of Students' Comments in Terms of Areas, Nature, and Types

No	Comments	Occurrence	
		Occurrence	Percentage
1.	Evaluation Global Revision (EGR)	25	4,4 %
2.	Evaluation Global Non-Revision (EGN)	122	22 %
3.	Evaluation Local Revision (ELR)	4	0,7 %
4	Evaluation Local Non-Revision (ELN)	95	17 %
5	Clarification Global Revision (CGR)	7	1,2 %
6	Clarification Local Revision (CLR)	9	1,6 %
7	Suggestion Global Revision (SGR)	43	7,6 %
8	Suggestion Global Non-Revision (SGN)	67	12 %
9	Suggestion Local Revision (SLR)	20	3,5 %

10	Suggestion Local Non-Revision (SLN)	94	16,6 %
11	Alteration Global Revision (AGR)	53	9,3 %
12	Alteration Local Revision (ALR)	28	5 %
	Total	567	100 %

From the table above, the total number of comments in online peer feedback in the combination of the three categories were; Evaluation global revision (EGR) 25 (4,4%), Evaluation global non-revision (EGN) 122 (22%), Evaluation local revision (ELR) 4 (0,7%), Evaluation local non-revision (ELN) 95 (17%), Clarification global revision (CGR) 7 (1,2%), Clarification local revision (CLR) 9 (1,6%), Suggestion global revision (SGR) 43 (7,6%), Suggestion global non-revision (SGN) 67 (12%), Suggestion local revision (SLR) 20 (3,5%), Suggestion local non-revision (SLN) 94 (16,6%), Alteration global revision (AGR) 53 (9,3%), Alteration local revision (ALR) 28 (5%),

Discussion

The result of study revealed that the students make a lot of comments in online peer feedback with the total of 567 comments. This number is categorized as high frequency. It means that the students strongly engaged in this activity. This may happen because online peer feedback provides an easy feature so that the students feel comfort in this mode. Since the students are gen Z generation, making comments is something like what they have been making when they are commenting something in their social media decreasing the tense like in face to face discussion. It is so automatic and they got fast respond so that when they curious or need help, they can share it freely with their peers. It also happens for the students who got the comments. Since the comments are addressed to the peers, it can encourage the students to reply and search for the other peer's comment.

Classified based on Liu's theory, online peer feedback comments in this study has different numbers in terms of areas, nature, and types. In terms of areas, local comments were the most dominated comments made by the students and reach 75 %. Maybe, it was due to there is no format displayed in the screen about the focus of comment although the teacher has reminded them to be more focus on global error. As a result, the students tend to comment in this sentence level since it is more eye catching for them. Finally, they will spend most of their time on this aspect. In contrast, the students' lobal comments only reach 25 %. It means that their mastery on how to write effectively is still low. They still focus on surface level than the deep level of the text itself.

Regarding the nature of the comment in which comments were classified into revision and non-revision oriented, the students produced more non-revision oriented which reached almost 72 % and the revision comments which is only 28 %. It is likely that the students spend more time in producing editing comments in which there is no reminder for them to limit it. In addition, it is also possible for them that they may not comfortable in reading the text displayed in the screen. Sometimes it was so tiring for the eyes to read a text with small font resulting the unnoticed the error in revision aspect such as the content and organization of the text. The students tend to produce comments about grammar and punctuation rather than the organization of ideas. In this case, it is possible that the students haven't mastered the aspects of how to write a good writing so that they only commented on what they know. It reflected how they mastered the material.

Finally, in terms of type, in which it is categorized into evaluation, clarification, suggestion, and alteration, the most dominant type was alteration followed by suggestion, evaluation and clarification. The possible reasons for this, is that because in the online peer feedback, there are some features in which he/she can make use of them to give the comments such as: delete, add, format, replace, etc. These features

trigger the students to produce more alteration for the comments because after writing, these features the students only need to type the point.

The total number of students' comments in online peer feedback is so many, it indicates that communication via online peer feedback makes the students got more exposure to express their ideas in the target language. The result of this study confirms to the previous studies stating that peer feedback via online is better than offline peer feedback which help trigger the students' activeness during the teaching and learning writing; however, this study also suggests the teacher to highlight some strategies in carrying out peer feedback so that the students can produce more global revision comments type for the peers.

CONCLUSION

Online peer feedback including using quip application can be employed by the teacher to increase the students' engagement in writing class as it provides more relaxed atmosphere in learning writing. In addition, it can improve the students' independence and achievement in writing class. However, the teacher's preparation scenario before conducting online peer feedback needs to be improve to support its result. When the students' responses are not really valuable for the peers, it can lower their motivation in conducting the following peer feedback session.

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