

Chapter Four

Finding and Discussion

This chapter presents finding and discussion. There are two main points explained in this chapter based on the research questions. The research questions are regarding with the activities students do in regard with writing assessment and washback of writing assessment applied at the English Language Education Department of a private university in Yogyakarta. The finding in the category of the activities students do in regard with writing assessment answered the first research question while category of washback of writing assessment answered the second research question. There are three findings in each point. The data are obtained after the researcher did an interview with four participants from batch 2017 or semester two when the data were taken. The researcher mentioned the participants as Participant One, Participant Two, Participant Three, and Participant Four. There are three findings in each point.

The Activities Students do in Regard with Writing Assessment

Based on the data obtained from four participants who were involved in this research, there are three findings related to the first research question, that is about the activities students do in regard with writing assessment. Those were; students did some preparation, the students received feedback on the assessment, and the students reviewed the result of assessment. The findings are discussed as follows:

Finding 1: The Students did some preparation before assessment.

This study found that students did some preparation before they do writing assessment. Four participants said that before the assessment they would study the material given by the lecturer in the previous meeting as their preparation for the assessment. The information about the assessment schedule usually came from the lecturer, classmates, and group chat. Four participants had the same answer, they said that before the assessment, the lecturer usually told them if they would have an assessment in the next meeting. As explained by Participant One that, “I will study before the assessment and stay aware of when the assessment will be conducted by looking at the schedule that the lecturer gave” (P1.1).

This research found that students reminded each other about the schedule of assessment by group chat. Participant Two said that group chat of whatsapp application functioned as a media to remind each other about assessment schedule. Participant Two said that:

“ If I forget usually the group class is active and discuss that there will be an assessment for tomorrow, which chapter it is, and so forth so we can immediately study ” (P2.1).

This study also found students did not always study for their preparation comprehensively. Since the assessment consisted of some chapters. Participant Three said that:

“ The studying is not comprehensive because the lecture gave assessments from chapter by chapter. More than three chapters are assessed and the

material are so many and not all of it are learned so I just study the materials briefly”(P3.1).

This research found that student memorized and read the material as their preparation before assessment. Participant Four gave an explanation about her way in studying before the assessment such as reading and memorizing the material before the day of the assessment. Participant Four said that, “ Usually, the first one I do is directly read the material which will be assessed by the lecturer. The second maybe a bit of memorizing, that’s all ” (P4.1).

Based on the data above, it can be seen that students always did some preparation before the assessment. The lecturer also always reminded the students about the schedule and students also reminded each other about the schedule of the assessment. The students do some preparation in some ways including momorizing and reading the materials.This result in line with Brown (2007) who stated that writing is a skill that makes the learners put in extra effort. Writing is a skill that involves thinking, preparation, and revision.

Finding 2: The students received feedback on the assessment.

Feedback is an important part of teaching and learning (Ako, 2009). Based on the result of the interview, fourparticipants said that the lecturer gave feedback as the result of their assessment. Participant One said that the leturer gave feedback for their writing task assessment. Participant One stated that:

“ After the assessment usually the lecturer gives feedback. Before the lecturer fixes it usually the students are asked to find the right answer, if

it is still difficult the lecturer will answer the question and then explain why this is the answer”(P1.4).

The students also gave an explanation about the way the lecturer gave feedback. It was mentioned by Participant Two, he said the lecturer asked them to check the answer together. Then, the lecturer gave an explanation about the false and the right answer. Participant Two said that:

“ Usually the lecturer directly give feedback. The lecturer will check the answer, giving mark, and an explanation for the wrong answer on the answer sheet then the lecturer will give an explanation while wrote it on the whiteboard ”(P2.3).

Based on all of the data above, all of the participant said that the feedback gave them some benefits for their writing ability. Participant One said that the feedback given by lecturer gave benefit for his writing ability, as stated below, “There is a benefit of feedback. The benefit is that we can know where the mistake or where the answer is lacking and what is lacking here should be fixed so we should study harder” (P1.8).

Participant Two said that feedback also gave benefit for his writing and that feedback makes him remember how to write in the right grammar. Participant Two said that , “My grammar is a bit of ambiguous, it seems like a bit lacking so the feedback make me remember how to write with the correct grammar” (P2.6).

Participant Three also said that feedback made her writing ability become better. Feedback makes her know her fault in the past assessment and learned it

then fixed it for the next assessment, as stated below, “There is a benefit, For example, if we know our mistake in the past so it can be fixed. Yes the grammar will be better” (P3.6).

In addition, Participant Four or the last participant mentioned that she got benefit from the feedback. Feedback make her writing ability a bit better. Participant Four said that, “ There is benefit of lecturer feedback. My grammar is bad, but after the lecture gave feedback like that it is not so bad even if it is not too good.” (P4.6).

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the lecturer gave feedback. The kind of feedback includes oral feedback and written feedback. Based on the result, feedback gives benefit for students writing abilities. In line with Ako (2009) who stated that feedback has the potential to have a significant effect on student learning achievement if the teacher gives an opportunity to students to ask confirmation and explanation of the feedback.

Finding 3: The students reviewed the result of assessment.

This research found that the students studying up the material by reviewing the result of assessment. This finding is stated by the first participant. Participant One said after the assessment he will check the false and wrong one on his answer sheet and find out the reason why the answer was wrong and right. Participant One stated that, “Well, After the assessment, the wrong answers are then re-learned again, like what did I do wrong and find the right answer of it” (P1.3).

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the assessment makes students study up the material. From the result of assessment, students study the material by looking at the wrong answer. Students tried to find out the the right answer of questions on the assessment sheet. According to Pease (2008), assessment can help to increase students' intrinsic motivation to learn and being responsible for their own learning and achievement. For example, when they did wrong on their assessment they can know what they did not understand and they can concentrate on improving.

The washback of writing assessment.

Based on the data obtained from students perception on writing assessment, there are four findings found related to the second research question, which is about the washback of writing assessment in the classroom. This research found three positive washback presented by writing assessment that applied in EED. Those are; the assessment made students do some preparation, feedback gave benefit for students writing ability, the result of assessment made students study the material. The following explanations are discussed as follows:

Finding 1: The assessment made students do some preparation

This research found that assessment presents positive washback because assessment made students do some preparation. Based on the result of interview the students are quite attentive to the material given in the class. Participant One said, "I will study before the assessment and stay aware of when the assessment will be conducted by looking at the schedule that lecturer given" (P1.1).

The student also memorized and read the material as their preparation before assessment. Participant Four gave an explanation about her way in studying before the assessment such as reading and memorizing the material before the day of the assessment. Participant Four said that, “Usually, the first one I do is directly read the material which will be assessed by the lecturer. The second maybe a bit of memorizing, that’s all” (P4.1).

Based on the data above, the washback of assessment applied by the lecturer gives positive washback. It present positive washback because the assessment makes students do some preparation which mean the students pay more attention to the material and prepare the material thoroughly. According to Alderson and Wall who identified different factors about washback in their hypothesis (as cited in Fulcher and Davidson, 2007) said that positive washback occur if the teacher uses tests in the classroom which aims to get students attention and prepare the material thoroughly. This means teachers encourage the students to prepare them for the test by studying the materials.

Finding 2: Feedback gave benefit for students writing ability.

This study found that assessment presented positive washback trough feedback. Based on the data from the first research question, it can be seen that feedback help students to increase their writing ability. Participant One said, “There is a benefit of feedback, The benefit is that we can know where the mistake or where the answer is lacking and what is lacking here should be fixed so we should study harder” (P1.8).

This research found that feedback reminded how to write using the correct grammar. It was mentioned by Participant Two. Participant Two said that, “My grammar is a bit of ambiguous, it seems like a bit lacking so the feedback make me remember how to write with the right grammar” (P2.6).

Feedback also makes students writing ability to be better. Feedback makes students know their lack of the material by looking at their false answer. This statement was mentioned by Participant Three. Participant Three stated that, “There is a benefit, for example, if we know our mistake in the past so it can be fixed. Yes the grammar will be better” (P3.6).

Based on the data above, it can be seen that feedback had successfully presented positive washback for students because feedback helps to improve the students’ writing ability. According to Brown (2003) one of the ways to increase washback is by giving feedback. Feedback on student task can give information about students weaknesses so they can learn from their mistake to improve their skills.

Finding 3: The result of assessment made students study the material.

This study found that assessment that the lecturer used presented positive washback through the result of the assessment itself. Students said that they did a review and study up the material after they receive their result of assessment. The result of students assessment makes them know their lack of the material. Students learned the material they were lacking by looking at their fault on the answer sheet of the assessment. This finding was mentioned by Participant One.

Participant One said, “Well, after the assessment the wrong answers are then re-learned again, like what did I do wrong and find the right answer of it” P1.3).

Based on data above, it can be seen that the assessment gave a positive washback in a form of students relearn the material from their result of assessment. According to Brown (2003) the assessment that present positive washback is the assesment that make student pay more attention to the material.