

Writing Anxiety And Facebook-Mediated Feedback

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ABSTRACT

Feedback can be classified into two common types, namely teacher and peer feedback. Teacher feedback is feedback provided by teachers and peer feedback is feedback provided by other students. The aim of this article is to explore writing feedback provided by students and its impact to the quality of writing by students who receive the feedback. The research was undertaken to higher education students enrolled in writing class. The result showed that writing in foreign language makes the students experience different dimensions of writing anxiety, such as somatic anxiety, avoidance behavior, and cognitive anxiety.

INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to investigate the feedback that are provided by the students on their friends' writings. For the implementation of Facebook-mediated feedback, the researcher will instruct the students to contribute feedback which cover three things, namely positive feedback (value), negative feedback (concerns), and constructive feedback (suggestions). Cole (2006) mentions that most writers are dependent on feedback providers, it is apparent that the student writers will be reliant on those three feedback. With regard to this matter, the students' feedback should be examined to discover whether the students present the positive, negative, and constructive feedback on their friends' writings.

How different are the students' writing quality according to the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from?

Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) was distributed to find out the students' writing anxiety. Moreover, the researcher observed, studied, and identified students' feedback that were posted on 'Write Art' Facebook Group to figure out how they presented feedback on their friends' writings.

FRAME OF THEORIES

Feedback can be classified into two common types, namely teacher and peer feedback. The former is defined as feedback from a source (the teacher) to a recipient in the form of information about the correctness, accuracy, or appropriateness of the recipient's past performance (Mottet, 2008 as cited in Maarof et al., 2011). The latter refers to students' engagement in the process of providing and receiving as well as sharing of comments and suggestions for the improvement of their peers' work (Gedera, 2012).

These days, peer feedback is preferable to be implemented in writing course since its benefits have been demonstrated by a number of studies. Lee and Liu, (2013) argue that it is highly beneficial for students to receive the feedback of because it enhances their reflective and analytical abilities. Tsui and Ng (2000) claim peer feedback allows the students learn more about writing by reading their peers' written drafts and raise their awareness of the weaknesses in their own writings.

Furthermore, Miao et al.'s study (2006) revealed that peer feedback is beneficial in encouraging learner autonomy. Kunwongse (2013) also states that the results of dynamic interactions between peers during peer feedback sessions can cover multiple functions such as asking questions, giving additional related information, making suggestions, enhances students to work cooperatively, benefit from each other, improve their writing, and communication skills in English. In addition, Ion et al. (2016) point out that peer feedback helps students to better learn, develop their competencies, get engaged with the learning process, and increase their self-regulation abilities.

However, in spite of these benefits, peer feedback that is conducted face-to-face still has several drawbacks. Sadat et al. (2016) mention that even though conventional peer feedback can assist students in learning language structures and expressions, there is possibility for their anxiety to be provoked. Likewise, Rollinson (2005) states that some students may not feel comfortable with certain aspects of the social interaction demanded by peer feedback. It is potential for certain students to feel uneasy when they are told to provide peer feedback face-to-face. Furthermore, Rollinson (2005) explains that the teacher will not be able to oversee all students simultaneously through conventional peer feedback. The limited opportunity for teachers to monitor the feedback provided by the students might bring up teachers' doubts and concerns in shifting responsibility to the students. Among these drawbacks, the main weakness of conventional peer feedback is possibly time constraints. According to Rollinson (2005), the implementation of face-to-face peer feedback might be interrupted due to time constraints. Consequently, this condition might affect the quality of feedback given by the students.

Thus, it can be inferred that the implementation of peer feedback should be carried out outside of the class and done through a medium that allows the students to provide their feedback anytime and anywhere and lets the teacher to monitor the students' feedback; that is an internet.

Writing Anxiety

Zeidner and Matthews (2011) defined anxiety as a psychological state in which the person's sense of uneasy suspense and worry is triggered by ambiguous circumstances. Furthermore, it refers to general feelings of uneasiness and distress about an unspecified, diffuse, uncertain, and often formless form of threat or danger (Zeidner and Matthews, 2011). Meanwhile, Krech and Crutchfield (1965 cited in Kouidou-Giles and McKee, 1971) perceive anxiety as "a state of apprehension by the person in which the source is usually not as specifically perceived as in fear: it often pertains to anticipations of future danger, such as punishment, or threats to self esteem. Anxiety typically leads to defensive reactions intended to allay or avoid the anxiety". Correspondingly, Zeidner and Matthews (2011) state that anxiety is often future-oriented; often, it accompanies concerns over possible disasters that the person anticipates. Based on these citations, it can be inferred that anxiety is a disturbing emotion suffered by an individual due to bad thought over particular event.

Anxiety can interfere in anyone's life, including college students. Hoffman (2015) notes that anxiety has always played a role in the developmental drama of a student's life, however nowadays it has surpassed depression as the most common mental health diagnosis among college students. With regard to education, anxiety can play significant role in students' learning and academic performance (Tobias, 1979 as cited in Fatma, 2015). Fatma (2015), in her study, found that anxiety had an impact on students' academic achievement in which it decreased learning capabilities and hindered excellent academic performance. Furthermore, Lyneham (2009) mentions other academic consequences of anxiety, such as 1) anxiety leads to poor academic performance & under achievement, 2) anxiety leads to poor engagement in class, 3) anxiety leads to school refusal, 4) anxiety leads to drop out, and 5) academic consequences lead to long term economic losses for individual and society. Moreover, it appears that anxiety can be categorized into three types:

Trait anxiety

It is recognized as a more permanent predisposition to be anxious (Scovel, 1978 as cited in Ellis, 1994). It is viewed as an aspect of personality (Ellis, 1994).

State anxiety

It is a kind of apprehension that is experienced at a particular moment as a response to a definite situation (Spielberger, 1983 as cited in Ellis, 1994). This kind of anxiety is a combination of trait and situation-specific anxiety (Ellis, 1994).

Situation-specific anxiety

It is defined as anxiety which is aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, exams, or class participation (Ellis, 1994).

Anxiety suffered by ESL or EFL students is labeled as situation-specific anxiety, since it is occurred in well-defined situation (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). Obviously, one of the language learning activities which could potentially brings up ESL or EFL students' anxiety is writing. Foreign language students who attend a writing course often experience writing anxiety; which can be defined as the negative feelings that writers have when they attempt to produce ideas and words (Wynne, 2010). Furthermore, Wynne (2010) adds that writing anxiety can prevent writers from being successful in their writing. In other words, the presence of writing anxiety might hinder the process of writing a text. Essentially, there are three-dimensional conceptualization of writing anxiety:

Somatic Anxiety

Somatic anxiety refers to one's perception of the physiological effects of the anxiety experience, as reflected in increased autonomic arousal of unpleasant feelings, such as nervousness and tension.

Avoidance Behavior

Avoidance behavior refers to the behavioural aspect in the avoidance of writing.

Cognitive Anxiety

Cognitive anxiety refers to the mental aspect of anxiety experience, including negative expectations, preoccupation with performance and concern about others' perception (Cheng, 2004).

Based on these dimensions, Cheng (2004) has developed a scale called Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) to identify students' writing anxiety which contains items relating to increased physiological arousal (somatic anxiety); indicative of avoidance behavior (avoidance behavior); and items that deal with perception of arousal and, in particular, worry or fear of negative evaluation. This scale has been used widely by a lot of researchers to examine writing anxiety, both in the ESL (Foroutan & Noordin, 2012; Golda, 2015) and EFL context (Jafari et al, 2014; Kurt and Atay, 2007; Yastibas and Yastibas, 2015).

RESULTS

Before analyzing the differences in students' writing quality according the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from, the researcher calculated the mean score of each dimension of writing anxiety included in Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). SLWAI was administered to discover dimension of writing anxiety. It is formatted in five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (uncertain), 4 (agree), 5 (strongly agree). There are seven items (1, 4, 7, 17, 18, 21, and 22) negatively worded in this questionnaire, thus reversed score was used in analyzing these items. The researcher analyzed the mean score through SPSS 23.0 and the results of the analysis are as follows.

Table 1 Mean Score of Somatic Anxiety

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	2.29	1	3.2	3.2	6.5
	2.43	1	3.2	3.2	9.7
	2.57	1	3.2	3.2	12.9
	2.86	4	12.9	12.9	25.8
	3.00	6	19.4	19.4	45.2
	3.14	5	16.1	16.1	61.3
	3.29	4	12.9	12.9	74.2
	3.43	3	9.7	9.7	83.9
	3.57	1	3.2	3.2	87.1
	3.71	1	3.2	3.2	90.3
	3.86	1	3.2	3.2	93.5
	4.14	2	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 revealed that the lowest mean score of somatic anxiety was 2.00 points, while the highest mean score of somatic anxiety was 4.14 points. There was one student who got the lowest mean score of somatic anxiety and there were two students who achieved the highest mean score of somatic anxiety.

Table 2 Mean Score of Avoidance Behavior

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.14	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	1.43	1	3.2	3.2	6.5
	1.71	1	3.2	3.2	9.7
	1.86	1	3.2	3.2	12.9
	2.00	3	9.7	9.7	22.6
	2.14	1	3.2	3.2	25.8
	2.29	7	22.6	22.6	48.4
	2.43	6	19.4	19.4	67.7
	2.57	4	12.9	12.9	80.6
	2.86	3	9.7	9.7	90.3
	3.00	2	6.5	6.5	96.8
	3.43	1	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Based on the results presented in Table 2 it can be seen that the lowest mean score of avoidance behavior was 1.14 points, whilst the highest mean score of avoidance behavior was 3.43 points. It was found that one student got the lowest mean score of avoidance behavior and one student attained the highest mean score of avoidance behavior.

Table 3 Mean Score of Cognitive Anxiety

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.13	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	2.25	3	9.7	9.7	12.9
	2.38	3	9.7	9.7	22.6
	2.50	1	3.2	3.2	25.8
	2.63	2	6.5	6.5	32.3
	2.88	3	9.7	9.7	41.9
	3.00	4	12.9	12.9	54.8
	3.13	5	16.1	16.1	71.0
	3.25	2	6.5	6.5	77.4
	3.38	1	3.2	3.2	80.6
	3.50	3	9.7	9.7	90.3
	3.63	1	3.2	3.2	93.5
	3.75	2	6.5	6.5	100.0
Total	31	100.0	100.0		

Table 3 showed that the lowest mean score of cognitive anxiety was 2.13 points, whilst the highest mean score of cognitive anxiety was 3.75 points. Apparently, there was one student who obtained the lowest mean score of cognitive anxiety and there were two students who got the highest mean score of cognitive anxiety.

After calculating the mean score of each dimension of writing anxiety, the researcher investigated the predominant dimension of writing anxiety that was suffered by each student through comparing the mean score of each dimension and identifying the highest mean score among those dimensions. Then, the researcher coded the students into '1' for somatic anxiety-student, '2' for avoidance behavior-student, and '3' for cognitive anxiety-student. Eventually, based on the results presented in Table 4 it was discovered that twenty one students experienced somatic anxiety as the predominant dimension of writing anxiety, none had avoidance behavior as the predominant dimension of writing anxiety, and ten students experienced cognitive anxiety as the predominant dimension of writing anxiety.

Table 4 Predominant Dimension of Writing Anxiety

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	21	67.7	67.7	67.7
	3.00	10	32.3	32.3	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Furthermore, to discover the differences in the students' writing quality according to the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from, the score of somatic-anxiety and cognitive-anxiety students' first and final drafts were examined. The results were presented as follows.

Table 5 Writing Score of Somatic-anxiety and Cognitive-anxiety Students

	anxtype	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Score1	1.00	21	74.4762	12.03378	2.62599
	3.00	10	73.2500	9.90300	3.13160
Score2	1.00	21	83.0238	9.01038	1.96623
	3.00	10	80.2500	8.24368	2.60688

In line with Table 4.9 above, it can be seen that the mean score of somatic-anxiety students' first draft was 74.47 points, whereas the mean score of cognitive-anxiety students' first drafts was 73.25 points. Moreover, the somatic-anxiety students

achieved 83.02 points for the mean score of their final drafts, whilst the cognitive-anxiety students got 80.25 points for the mean score of their final drafts. Based on these results, it can be known that somatic-anxiety and cognitive-anxiety students achieved different score on the first and the final draft. Additionally, the researcher made an attempt to calculate the gain score of somatic-anxiety and cognitive anxiety students. The results of the calculation can be seen below

Table 6. Gain Score of Somatic-anxiety and Cognitive-anxiety Students

	N	Mean Score (First Drafts)	Mean Score (Final Drafts)	Gain
Somatic-anxiety	21	74.4762	83.0238	8.54
Cognitive-anxiety	10	73.2500	80.2500	7.00
	N	Mean Score (First Drafts)	Mean Score (Final Drafts)	Gain
Somatic-anxiety	21	74.4762	83.0238	8.54
Cognitive-anxiety	10	73.2500	80.2500	7.00

It can be seen in Table 4.6 that the mean score of somatic-anxiety students increased by 8.54 points, from 74.47 points to 83.02 points. In contrast, the improvement of the mean score of cognitive-anxiety students was 7.00 points, from 73.25 points to 80.25 points. Thus, it can be inferred that the writings of both groups were affected positively, however somatic-anxiety students achieved greater gain score than cognitive-anxiety students. Furthermore, to discover whether there are significant differences in the students' writing quality according to the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from, the researcher analyzed the data through ANOVA. The table of ANOVA calculation can be seen below

Table7. Results of ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	52.121	1	52.121	.676	.418
Within Groups	2235.363	29	77.081		
Total	2287.484	30			

	N	Mean Score (First Drafts)	Mean Score (Final Drafts)	Gain
Somatic-anxiety	21	74.4762	83.0238	8.54
Cognitive-anxiety	10	73.2500	80.2500	7.00

The results of ANOVA calculation showed that the F-value was .676 and the two-tailed significance was .418. It appeared that the F-value was lower than the F-table (.676<4.18) and the the two-tailed significance was higher than .05 (.418>.05). These results suggested that there were no significant differences in the students' writing quality according to the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from. The means plot of the ANOVA calculation can be seen below.

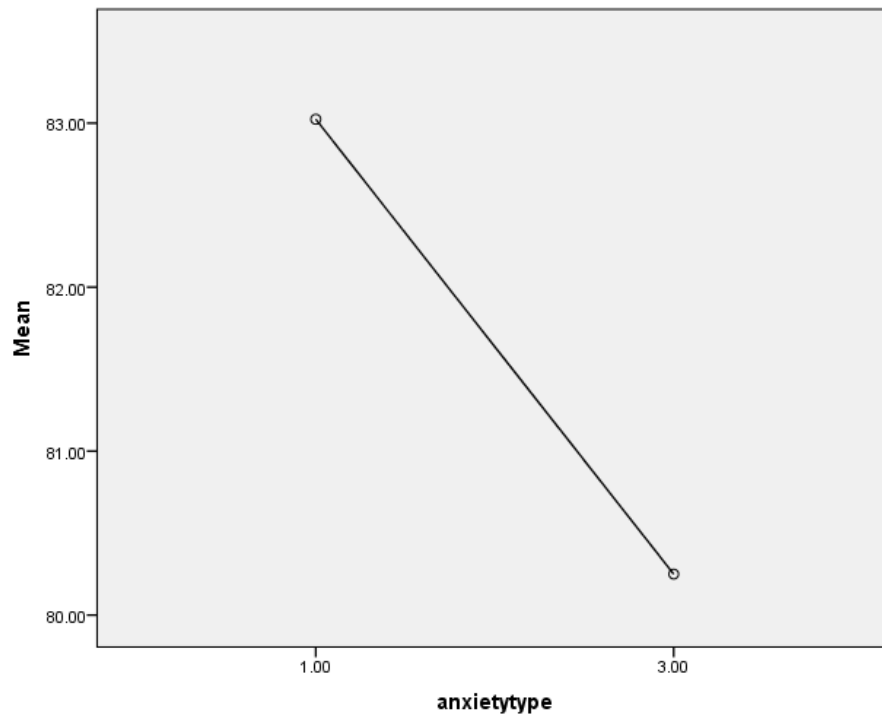


Figure 1. Means Plot

The means plot in Figure 4.2. illustrated that the mean score varied between somatic-anxiety and cognitive-anxiety students. It can be seen that the location of somatic-anxiety students' mean score was higher than the location of cognitive-anxiety students' mean score

DISCUSSION

After analyzing the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory through SPSS, it was found that there were 21 somatic-anxiety students and 10 cognitive-anxiety students participated in this research. The results proved that every student experiences anxiety in the teaching-learning process, especially in a writing course. These results support what has been claimed by Hoffman (2015) that anxiety has always played a role in the developmental drama of a student's life. Basically, anxiety is not only experienced by students, but also experienced by all human beings. However, each human's anxiety might not be triggered by the same factor. The researcher assumed that students' anxiety emerged because the students have to deal with things that are demanding, challenging, and score-oriented. The students are required to learn many subjects diligently and achieve good learning results, therefore it is reasonable if they experience anxiety.

Furthermore, the anxiety which was investigated in this research is writing anxiety. It was believed that students' writing anxiety emerged because the process of writing is extremely complex (Hamp-Lyons and Heasley, 1987 as cited in Nunan, 1991). Some people might even consider writing as a tough and time-consuming activity. Even Harmer (1998) states that students have to go through a mental activity in order to construct proper written texts. Student writers must collect ideas for their writings and write them down in English, a language that is neither their first nor second language. After writing down their ideas, students writers still have to go through revising and editing stage for several times until their writings deserve to be published. Since writing is a complicated activity, it is no wonder that it could trigger students' writing anxiety.

Based on the results of the research, it was discovered that there were no significant differences in the students' writing quality according to the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from. In other words, it can be stated that the quality of writings between somatic-anxiety and cognitive-anxiety students were relatively the same. According to Morris, Davis, & Hutchings (1981 as cited in Cheng, 2004), somatic anxiety is one's perception of the physiological effects of the anxiety experience, as reflected in increased autonomic arousal of unpleasant feelings, such as nervousness and tension. Meanwhile, cognitive anxiety refers to the mental aspect of anxiety experience, including negative expectations, preoccupation with performance and concern about others' perception (Morris, Davis, & Hutchings, 1981 as cited in Cheng, 2004). It can be implied that, theoretically, somatic-anxiety and cognitive-anxiety students show different symptoms when they experience writing anxiety. However, in relation to the results of the research, the dissimilar symptoms did not cause the differences between somatic-anxiety and cognitive-anxiety students' writing quality.

The researcher assumed that the insignificant differences between somatic-anxiety and cognitive anxiety students' writing quality happened because the students already have sufficient knowledge about writing. At the time of the research, the students who participated in this research attended an Intermediate Writing class. Intermediate Writing is a compulsory subject which can be taken only if the students pass the other compulsory subjects, which are Basic and Pre-Intermediate Writing. Since the students already passed those two compulsory subjects and attended

Intermediate Writing class, it was believed that both somatic-anxiety and cognitive-anxiety students must already have sufficient knowledge about how to produce a good composition, how to develop their essays, and how to write grammatically correct sentences. Therefore, it is no wonder if the differences between somatic-anxiety and cognitive anxiety students' writing quality were not statistically significant.

CONCLUSIONS

Writing in foreign language makes the students experience different dimensions of writing anxiety, such as somatic anxiety, avoidance behavior, and cognitive anxiety. Hence, the researcher desired to find out the differences in the students' writing quality according to the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from. It was discovered that there were no significant differences in the students' writing quality according to the predominant dimension of writing anxiety they suffer from. It can be concluded that the students' writing quality are not affected by the dissimilar predominant dimension of writing anxiety that they suffer from. Their writing quality are somewhat the same, even though they experience different predominant dimension of writing anxiety.

Since the student writers rely a lot on feedback providers, the researcher investigated the students' feedback on their friends' writings. It was revealed that the students provided positive, negative, and constructive feedback on their friends' writings. It can be concluded that the students express willingness to help their friends improve the quality of their writings by providing beneficial feedback. Nevertheless, the students lack awareness about the importance of giving clear and specific feedback as they still presented unclear and unspecific feedback on their friends' writings and their incorrect feedback might ruin their friends' writings if they are accepted without question. Furthermore, it is recommended that further research investigate the effect of Facebook-mediated feedback on students' level of anxiety. It appears that the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), a questionnaire which was employed to determine the dimension of writing anxiety in the present study, can be used to figure out students' level of writing anxiety as well. Therefore, the researcher suggests that further research explore students' level of anxiety before and after being given Facebook-mediated feedback.

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