Portraying Lecturers' Expectations in the Teaching of Writing during the Outbreak of Covid-19: A Case Study in Indonesian Islamic University

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Abstract

In the past several decades, teachers' expectations played an important role in teacher behavior. Teachers' expectation at the tertiary level remains relatively under-researched. The uncommon conditions have emerged during the outbreak of Covid-19, where teachers' expectations tend to be different since students' motivation and engagement are decreased. The study is aimed to investigate lecturers' expectations in the teaching of writing based on feedback provided by lecturers during distance learning. This current study adopted an exploratory case during a semester in one of the Islamic universities in Indonesia. To collect the data, initially, the lesson plans composed by the three lecturers were collected. The online observations were conducted in three writing classes. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were then used to elicit further data related to lecturers' feedback as one of the key focuses of teachers' expectations. The whole collected data were then analyzed employing an interactive model. Findings revealed that university teachers established class-level teachers' expectations by viewing students as a whole unity in the classrooms, hence, they provided learning feedbacks randomly not for each student. As an implication, this study encouraged teachers to increase their awareness to establish high expectations so that they perform instructional behavior and classroom environment that reinforce students learning.

Keywords**:** essay, feedback, teachers' expectations

Introduction,

There have been a lot of discussions about teachers' expectations since they have a big impact on how teachers behave. As a result, teachers can act in the classroom according to their expectations. Their expectations may become self-fulfilling prophecies if they expect exceptional performance from specific students, which those students will deliver. Pygmalion in the Classroom, the first study on teacher expectations, was conducted by a Harvard University professor and an Oak School elementary headmaster (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). They presented false information about several students. They also highlighted teachers who had high expectations of their students and interacted with them differently. Those kids would perform well, but when teachers expected certain students to perform poorly, those students would also perform poorly.

Some studies have concentrated on teacher expectations at the elementary and secondary levels (Babad, Inbar, & Rosenthal, 1982; Rubie-Davies, 2007; Sorhagen, 2013). The understanding of lecturers' expectations could be achieved by the findings of the current study. Lecturers could take this information to increase awareness about the importance of high expectations for all the students in a classroom to raise students' learning. An important key focus of teachers' expectations is viewed from feedback that lecturers should give effective feedback. It is important to note that teachers need to create interactions that accommodate students' expertise and skill.

Lecturers typically establish class-level expectations, which means that if they have high expectations for a class, they will also have high expectations for other classes (Li & Rubie-Davies, 2016). They carried out quantitative research to look into the effects of teachers' expectations on Chinese first-year undergraduate students and determine if teachers' expectations were linked to student year-end achievement. According to this study, lecturers' expectations are divided into three categories: high, medium, and low. Furthermore, teachers' expectations for student groups will result in a larger and more powerful self-fulfilling prophecy effect (Rubie-Davies, 2006). Because students at the new level have less self-confidence and are more reliant on their teachers' help, they may be more susceptible to teacher expectation effects (Eden & Shani, 1982). This research corroborated Li & Rubie-Davies' (2016) findings that their participants were first-year undergraduate students transitioning from high school to tertiary education, making them more vulnerable to teachers' expectation effects. In another aspect, university students frequently interact with their lecturers as a group rather than one-on-one (Jussim, 1986).

Rubie-Davies (2007) investigated classroom interactions between high- and low-expectation teachers and divided them into five categories: teaching statements, questioning, feedback, procedural statements, and behavior management statements. Praise, criticism, and learning feedback are the three types of feedback. Praise was defined as positive comments to a person or group that did not include or included a learning, procedural, or managerial statement. Criticism comprised unfavorable words that targeted an individual or a group. Learning feedback was limited to a few phrases in which students were informed about their progress on a task. She included twenty-one elementary teachers from twenty schools; she found that the HiEx (high expectation) and LoEx (low expectation) teacher groups, as well as the AvPr (average progress expectation) teacher groups, had statistically significant differences in praise following a correct response. While Wang, Rubie-Davies, & Meissel (2019) conducted a study in Chinese secondary schools revealed that when a student offered a correct answer, teachers with high expectations gave more class-level feedback and were more inclined to question further and provide explanations. When a student gave a wrong answer or was unable to come up with one, high expectation teachers were more likely to rephrase/repeat the question, provide advice, or simply ask the student to try again.

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The aforementioned studies have explored the whole key focuses of teachers' expectations. On the contrary, the present study only describes teachers' feedback. Additionally, the context of those studies was in China that result in different findings. Nevertheless, this study is conducted in Indonesia during online learning when both lecturers and students must switch to remote distance learning. To our knowledge, studies about teachers' expectations were commonly in the form of qualitative design, while this study offers an investigation of teachers' expectations in a natural way. The qualitative research needs additional data from other techniques of data collection that will give a deep understanding and describe reality and social dimension.

The objective of this current study was to investigate lecturers' expectations especially viewed from feedback. The unit analysis of this study was on teachers' feedback in the writing classes during online learning in one of the state Islamic universities in Indonesia for a semester. This study addresses the research question: How are lecturers' expectations in writing classes amid the Covid pandemic? The rests of this study comprise research methodology in which how the research was conducted, findings that describe the data obtained during the research, a discussion that explains the findings along with the similarities and differences with the previous studies. At last, the paper ends with a conclusion and offer any suggestion.

Research Methodology,

Yin (2018) contended that a case study could be employed since the topic of this study requires a detailed and "in-depth" analysis of social phenomena, and the researchers did not have control among the activities. An exploratory case study, he added, indicates the research themes that will be used in subsequent research, which may or may not be a case study. This exploratory case study method was used to examine lecturers' expectations, which included a thorough examination of events and activities, particularly feedback from three distinct Islamic university lecturers and their teaching activities.

Three lecturers (one female and two males) and their 106 students (particularly 33-37 students in each class) participated in this study. This research was conducted in the second semester of the English Education Department and the Letters Department at an Islamic university in a small Indonesian city. The university was chosen for this study since it was easy to recruit participants and they were willing to be investigated and provide information in response to research questions. Hence, the researchers employed convenience sampling. However, the result of this study could not be generalized since the participants of this study were only three. Table 1 shows the lecturers' demographic descriptions. Lecturer B and Lecturer C taught in the Argumentative Writing course, while Lecturer A taught in the English for Professional Communication course. Those classes consisted of fourteen meetings, a mid-term exam, and a final exam.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Lecturers

Pseudonym	Gender	Teaching Experience	Age
Lecturer A	Male	8 years	31 – 40 year
Lecturer B	Male	7 years	31 – 40 year
Lecturer C	Female	5 years	31 – 40 year

The researchers employed online observation, online and face-to-face interviews, and document analysis. At the initial, the researchers collected the lecturers' lesson plans to know how they designed their learning. It also gave the researcher initial information about the data that would be obtained during observation. Subsequently, the non-participant online observations were conducted during a semester while the researchers did not involve in the activities. Then, the researchers captured the chat in the WhatsApp Group, Google Classroom, and Schoology whereby the three teachers delivered material and have discussions. The two lecturers usually provided feedback synchronously through Google Meet. Also, Lecturer C provided feedback in the Google Classroom where the students directly uploaded their essays. All of the synchronous meetings through Google Meet were recorded. After that, each lecturer was semi-structured interviewed twice in the form of WhatsApp calls for Lecturer C, and face-to-face interviews with Lecturer A and Lecturer B. All of the interviews were audio-recorded and then be transcribed.

The qualitative data were then analyzed using an interactive model by Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014), in which the data collection and data analysis run concurrently. First, the data from online observation, interviews, and document analysis were condensed. Data were categorized, converged, and coded, while any unused data was being removed. The data were coded into several topics or categories. Second, the data was displayed in the form of a table completed with a brief analysis while the common codes were used as the emergent categories. Last, the researchers concluded and verified that conclusion. In this present study, the researchers used the method of triangulation by employing various techniques of data collection to achieve the right data.

Findings and Discussion,

Findings

1. Two lecturers provided more learning feedback

Lecturer A and Lecturer C provided more learning feedback to students' essays. From the online observations, Lecturer A gave learning feedback twice in the fourth and seventh meetings. Additionally, Lecturer C also provided learning feedback twice in the sixth and eighth meetings. She only randomly reviewed three students' essays with criteria of appropriate, medium appropriate, as well as inappropriate. The paragraph being reviewed was separately from the introduction, body, and conclusion. All of the students might take the reviewed essay as a base to revise the essay that should be submitted in the following week. The unusual finding emerge in the tenth meeting since Lecturer C allowed students to review their friends' essays. Three students reviewed their three friends' essays,

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while Lecturer C followed those reviews by supplementary feedback as a concluding remark. Furthermore, she gave learning feedback on Google Classroom through personal comments at the tenth meeting. Regarding feedback, Lecturer A believed that students' essays should be reviewed to enable them to become more conscious of their incorrect essays. As a result, the two lecturers shared a common habit of providing learning feedback, though in various ways.

> Lecturer A : ... *If I allow students to submit drafts without evaluation, they will have a high level of confidence. You have seen their rough drafts on Google Meet or in a WhatsApp Group. Although there were numerous errors in an essay, students felt as if they had been insulted.*

On the one hand, Lecturer B did not provide learning feedback regarding students' essays, rather he only answered students' questions during the discussion. However, the lesson plans developed by three lecturers less clearly explained the way feedback was given during a semester.

2. Two lecturers provided feedback in the form of praise and criticism

Findings from online observations revealed that two lecturers seemingly provided criticism as feedback rather than praise because students had many common mistakes. Conversely, Lecturer A always provided positive feedback toward students' questions; he always thanked students that asked questions. He gave feedback in the form of praise to students' selection of topics through the WhatsApp Group. Students stated their topic, then Lecturer A advised possible sentences. At the same time, Lecturer C usually praised and further questioned the students who correctly answer her question. On the contrary, she paraphrased her question to be easier so that students could answer the questions. She also provided feedback on the elements of students' essays when it came to learning feedback. She subsequently stressed the importance of the elements of argumentative essays, as well as the arguments that must be confirmed by facts and citations.

3. Three lecturers developed class-level expectations

The findings of online observations demonstrated that the three lecturers created class-level expectations. The data obtained from the interview illustrate the same results.

> Lecturer A : *I have set expectations for the entire class. The entire class expectation is based only on the fact that the class has completed a certain assignment.*
>
> Lecturer B : *I look at the pupils thoroughly because I find it tough to evaluate them on an individual level in this remote learning.*
>
> Lecturer C : *As I have never reviewed all of their essays, I viewed them as a whole unity in a classroom. I simply checked them slightly in sampling.*

The lesson plans developed by the lecturers clearly stated the expectations for all of the students to comprehend the essay writing.

Discussion

The present study elucidates the feedback given by three lecturers in the teaching of writing in one of the Indonesian state Islamic universities amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Feedback as one of the key focuses of teachers' expectations was highlighted in the current study. Each lecturer performed feedback in different ways. The two lecturers could be considered high expectation lecturers since they provided more feedback on students' essays. Rubie-Davies (2007) found that teachers with high expectations provided their students with more regular feedback on students' learning than teachers with low expectations.

Lecturer A and Lecturer C gave class-level feedback since they randomly reviewed students' essays whereby a student could revise their essays based on the feedback given by lecturers. Moreover, those two lecturers provided further questioned to students who answered accurately. These findings tie well with a study conducted by Wang et al. (2019). It is also in line with the ideas of De Boer, Timmermans, & van der Werf (2018), who identified that high-expectation teachers provide more frameworks and feedbacks for students' learning, ask their students by using more higher-order questions, and organize the students' behavior more positively.

This online learning affected the way lecturers provided feedback to students. Lecturer A and Lecturer C chose essays that reflected common mistakes at random. They had less experience reviewing students' essays through online mode, preferring instead to review students' printed essays in the conventional classroom. Although lecturers had previously introduced technology into their traditional pedagogical classrooms, this unusual situation has left both lecturers and students unprepared to change their learning. They have experienced this online learning for only two years that resulting in their unpreparedness to enable technology to review students' essays. This finding leads to similar Nespor (1987) who identified that prior experiences have an impact on teachers' attitudes and actions. Lecturer A and Lecturer C usually provided feedback through synchronous Google Meet. However, Lecturer C required students to submit all of the works that have been reviewed. This was different with Lecturer A since he did not require students to resubmit all of the previous essays that have been reviewed.

An interview with Lecturer C found that students got their ' motivation decreased as their essays were reviewed. It happened because students have thought that their efforts have been maximum. Besides, lecturers should build a psychologically secure feedback environment. Johnson, Keating, & Molloy (2020) have suggested that teachers should have a belief that the educator-learner relation is safe for interpersonal risk-taking, resulting in faith that the educator would not embarrass, reject, or punish the learner due to mutual respect and trust.

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Two lecturers established expectations for the entire class. According to a prior study by Li & Rubie-Davies (2016), lecturers appeared to view students as a whole group, since they could not altogether memorize students rather they could only memorize students with various personalities, such as active and industrious. It is important to correctly interpret that when students were transferred from the usual condition to the new one, they were more receptive to the teacher's expectation effects (Eden & Shani, 1982). Furthermore, according to the cognitive load theory (Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011), lecturers are more likely to work at the class level rather than at an individual level. The lecturers suggested that they have a lot of work to do in this pandemic because everything has to be done online, and they have to grade students' homework, plan and distribute course content, and monitor students' theses. According to Abidah, Hidaayatullaah, Simamora, Fehabutar, & Mutakinati (2020), Indonesian lecturers have obstacles as a result of increased workload in preparing online learning, as well as a lack of scientific data to enable the development of response solutions.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The paper concludes by arguing that each lecturer gave feedback to the students in different ways. Lecturer A and Lecturer C could be categorized as high expectation lecturers as they actively gave feedback on students' learning: feedback on students' selection of topics, drafting, and outline. Also, they delivered learning feedback following students' tasks or essays. While Lecturer B only gave feedback on students' questions. This pandemic requires lecturers to adjust their teaching activities online. It urges them to enable technology in giving effective feedback to fix students' learning gaps.

The knowledge of teachers' expectations could elevate lecturers' awareness to develop high expectations in their classrooms. This analysis found implications that lecturers could join any online or face-to-face webinars and workshops to increase their expertise in enabling technology to give feedback in online or hybrid learning. Because of the potential limitation, we only investigated one of the keys focuses of teachers' expectations: teacher's feedback. Another limitation in the number of participants made the results of this study could not be generalized. As also recommend above, future research should explore the key focuses of teachers' expectations entirely. Future research may recruit more participants to gain a more complex understanding of teachers' expectations. Moreover, the possibility of the lecturer's expectations of other skills warrants further investigation.

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