PEER FEEDBACK IN
FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING CLASS:
STUDENTS' PERCEPTION AND PROBLEMS

Rani Aprilyani*[1], Agus Rofi'i*[2], Rahma Ilyas*[3]
aprilyarani97@gmail.com[*1], gusrafi87@gmail.com[*2], rahma.rs596@gmail.com[*3]
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
University of Majalengka

ABSTRACT

Many students claim that writing is the most difficult skills due to it is complicated in its production. In their learning, the students need a suitable method to help their writing. Peer feedback is the one of those methods that can support students' learning writing in non-threatening atmosphere. This research aims to reveal EFL students' problems in learning writingand students' perceptions about peer feedback method in learning writing.In this research, the qualitative research design used was a case study through the instrument that are observation and interviewfor collecting the data.The participant of this research is eleventh grade of electricity engineering in one of vocational school in Majalengka. The result showed that students still faced the common problems in learning writing. The highest percentage of students' problem is in vocabulary (45%) and the lowest percentage is in create content (5%). However, after implemented the practice of peer feedback, majority of the students provided the positive perceptions toward peer feedback.There is 70% students said that peer feedback helped them in learning writing. Also, they said that peer feedback has a number of benefits for their writing.

Keywords: *Foreign Languange, Peer Feedback, Writing.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is an essential abilities that need to be mastered by the students. According to Abdullah, Hussin & Shakir (2018: 196), in education and workplace field, writing ability is considered to be one of most crucial English language abilities due to its important function. In addition, Bijami et al (2013: 92) mentions that writing has become crucial as a measure in academia for academic success. Besides, as stated by Brown (2004) writing is an ability that needs to be learned and taught to the students, especially those who learn English as a foreign language. Therefore,mastery of writing ability is primary significance for all students to successfully accomplish tasks of writing and it is even more crucial for EFL students as they have to write in foreign language.

Based on preliminary study, several students still have problems in learning English, especially writing. EFL students claims that writing ability often considered as the most difficult ability. Hence in its production, they face difficulties in selecting the suitable words, conveying correct grammar rules, finding ideas, capitalization, spelling and punctuation. Even several students said that sometimes they feel confused when they will find the ideas to start the writing until sometimes they feel frustrated. Furthermore, they should master several elements of writing to achieve successful writing task. Several elements of writing such as organization, content, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics, so it is obviously a complex process. As Kusumaningrum, Cahyono, & Prayogo (2019), writing in English is frequentlyclaimed as the most complex abilities compared to the other three skills. Thus, it is no wonder that students ponder that writing is most difficult to master.

To solved the problem above, English teachers shouldbe more creativein teaching writing in the classroom, they need to change the method into something more interesting in EFL writing class. Whereas, the teachers' methods to teach writing are crucial factors that may influence to the students' writing skill. One of those methods is the practice of providing peer feedback. Peer feedback is a practice in which students examine their work each other and they are engaging in giving and receiving feedback. It provides them opportunity to share ideas and give comments to their peers, so they can revise their work based on the instruction from their peers. As the statement from Afrasiabi and Khojasteh (2015) that peer-feedback is a type of method in which students mutual give and receive feedback with their peers. In writing instruction, it has come to take an essential part (Bijami et al, 2013: 92). It is because students need several feedback on their writing to make their writing better.

Based on the phenomenon explained, the researcher need to reveal the kinds of common problems that face by EFL students in learning writing and students' perceptions about peer feedback method in learning writing. Therefore, the researcher formulates the research problem are:

1. What are of common problems that face by EFL students in learning writing?
2. How students' perceptions about peer feedback method in learning writing?

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research design used was in the form of case study, which means trying to understand a particular issue or problem (Stake in Kratt, 2018: 26). According to Hancock and Algozzine in King (2019: 36), case study research is "focused on an in-depth analysis and description of an individual or individuals representative of a group, an organization, or a phenomenon in a real-life context". The researcher used a case study research design in orderto answer the research question based on the real life context.

In the current study, the researcher utilized a qualitative research design to explore the nature of the phenomenon that are concern or study individuals' views with the researcher as the main instrument for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2012). Furthermore, the case study research methodology was chosen to reveal the problem that faced by EFL students in learning writing and students' perception toward peer feedback method.

Through the case study, the researcher used the interview as the main data source. The researcher interviewed ten students of electricity engineering students in one of the vocational school in Majalengka to get the data based on their opinion related to the issue of EFL students' problem in learning writing and students' perception about peer feedback method. In addition, the researcher used the observation as the secondary data source in order to know the learning process in the classroom and to understand about peer feedback activity in the classroom.

The researcher had to pass three steps in analyzing data(Ary, 2010: 481), namely familiarizing and organizing, coding and reducing and interpreting and organizing. In order to make the data analysis easier, the researcher categorized the kind of students' problem and students' perception toward peer feedback and calculating them in the percentage by using the formula that proposed by Kim et al (2017: 59). Then, the researcher used the table to present the data. Afterwards, the researcher interpreted the datain narratively.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

What are of common problems that face by EFL students in learning writing?

After the researcher got the data of EFL students' problems in learning writing, the researcher analyzed the data and classified them into several category. Based on the data that the researcher analyzed, the students have varied problems in the basic elements of writing even several students have more than one problems.

Majority students have problem in vocabulary due to EFL students lack knowledge of suitable vocabulary.Vocabulary is the highest number of problem categories that faced by the students. Most students have difficulty in choosing the appropriate words. For instance, the students felt confused when they want to use the words based on the context e.g. if they want to find the word "*membuat*" in the dictionary, it will comes three words, they are 1) manufacture, make, establish, contrive; 2) do; and 3) cause. Thus, the students feel confused in choosing the word that suitable for their writing.

Mechanic also poses their problem in writing as they did not aware of punctuation and spelling in writing. For instance they did not added period punctuation (.) in the end of the sentences and they did not added comma in the sentences that need comma e.g. the students write 'First I prepare the materials to make fried rice'. The students just let the sentences without the punctuation in their writing. Furthermore, the students faced the problems in spelling. It is because English has different in writing and pronunciation, so students difficult to memorizing the writing of each words.

Moreover, the major problem for most of the students is in memorizing grammar rules in writing assignment. Students are more conscious about grammar mistakes because they are realized that they still did not enough understand about the grammar even several of them did not know about grammar exactly. Based on their perspective, grammar is complicated. They cannot understand about the use of Verb 1 and Verb 2and its function of each verb. Even they claimed that L1 and English have different sentence structure, so it makes the students difficult and feel confused in writing English.

Additionally, several students still have poor paragraph structure in writing. It is because their previous habit in the previous writing did not pay attention to writing organization and they just write irregularly. As a result, all of the problems influences tothe content and result in weak writing. Besides that, students have writing anxiety that caused the content production. They felt anxiety if they create a wrong content because they felt ashamed if their peers know they was wrong.

How students' perceptions about peer feedback method in learning writing?

Based on the interview result, the students provided the positive perceptions toward peer feedback. The students claimed that peer feedback is helpful in their learning writing, because there are many benefits that students got from peer feedback activities. As 58,35% students mentioned that they became know their mistakes on their writing.It is because students engage in critical evaluation through peer feedback for the purpose of exchanging assistance for revision, so they became know the mistakes on their writing. Students said that they cannot realized their mistakesin the previous writing, because they cannot identify their own mistakes. After implemented peer feedback activities, most students realized that they still make any mistakes in writing.

In addition, 25% students got new knowledge from peer feedback activities.It is the result of the interactions between peers during peer feedback activities, it gave students opportunity to do any interactions with their peers such as asking question, sharing ideas and giving additional related information toward their peers' writing. Also, itstimulates students to make suggestions and give some instructions to their peers' writing. Hence, the receiver of feedback got comment from their peers and they got some instructions on their writing, so they can learn from their peers' comment and they got new knowledge to correct their writing and make their second writing better.

Furthermore, 8,33% students increase their motivation in learning writing. From peer feedback activities, the students got motivation from their peers to revise their writing. Before applied peer feedback, students did not like writing because writing is boring lesson. Then, after they saw another writing assignment

and they are sharing ideas with their peers, they realized that writing is enjoyable, so they feel motivated to carry on studying and increase their learning. Therefore, peer feedback gives critical role to students writing in the future.

Moreover, 8,33% students can compare their writing with their peers. When they examine and providing feedback to their peers, they also can see their peers' writing and compare with their own writing. Students are conscious of their own mistakes through reading their peers' writing, because they cannot identify their own writing but they can realize when they see their peers' mistakes. They applied the knowledge that they got from examined their peers' writing.Thus, this activity improves their skill to evaluate their own work and became more critical in correcting of their own writing and mistakes.

In line with the observation result, peer feedback boots students' collaborative learning in the classroom. It is because peer feedback activities gives learners opportunity to interaction with their peers and make students in non-threatening atmosphere. This situation makes students freely to communicate with their peers. It allows students to become more independent and active in the learning, because this method indicate students centered learning. In addition, after they examined their work each other, they became know their peers also make the same mistakes, so peer feedback also improves students' confidence to do not afraid anymore when they make mistakes in their writing. As a result, it will less students anxiety in writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the research, students claimed that writing is difficult. They still faced the common problems in learning writing such as in organization, content, grammar, vocabulary and mechanic. Nevertheless, after the teacher applied peer feedback in their learning, students show the positive perceptions toward the teaching and learning process. They very fun during peer feedback activities. Also it makes students more active in the classroom, because this method is indicate students centered learning, so they can interaction with their peers freely. In addition, students can discuss with their peers in non-threating atmosphere. They feel enjoyable in collaborative learning such as

sharing ideas, examine their work each other, giving useful comment and suggestions to their writing. As a result it can increase students' confidence to revise and improve their writing skills.

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