

THE USE OF PEER FEEDBACK TOWARD EFL STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL

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Abstract. This paper aimed to describe the implementation of peer feedback and how it can increase the writing skill of English as Foreign Language students. This paper is a library research. The method of this paper is descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected through analyzing papers, articles, and journals. The findings of this paper showed the reasons why peer feedback is useful toward writing skill of English as foreign language students. The students work collaboratively, minimizes errors, and saving time. The procedure of the strategy enables the students to work cooperatively in a group/peer. Peer feedback can be one solution to minimize the errors the students usually make in their writing before submit their writing draft to the teacher. The teacher can save much time in assessing the students' work by conducting peer feedback in writing learning because the students' work already corrected by their peer so it may have a little mistake left.

Keywords: *Peer feedback, writing skill, EFL students*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most important skills for foreign language learners in learning English. It is also one of essential skill that needs to be mastered by the student, especially in language learning context. Writing has a unique position in language teaching in involving a practice and knowledge of other three language skills, such as listening, reading and speaking. Writing is very important in human life especially in realizing language communication as the result of the expression of thoughts, feelings, plans and knowledge (Nasser, 2016; Nejad, et.al, 2016). This is similar with Lin and Yang (2011) that states writing is one of the language skills that can be used to express ideas, thoughts, or to send a message to the reader. In addition, writing also indicates academic success since writing is commonly used to measure and evaluate the students' academics (Tan in Ceylan, 2019). It includes several indicators of writing such as title, topic sentence, grammar used, diction, development, arrangement, and mechanic. Further, the students are expected to be able to master all of those indicators of writing.

Writing is a complex skill that must be mastered by students. Adnan and Najogi (2019) assume that writing is a difficult skill to be mastered. This is also similar with Muthoharoh and Anita in 2018 that states writing is the most difficult skill of other skills in language aspects. This is because writing has many important components to analyze such as content, use of language, organization, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and mechanics. Moreover, the ability to set the ideas in written communication should also be mastered. Learners need to set an objective for their writing, plan it carefully, think over its layout and logical structure. In the process of writing they have to use cognitive skills; they have to analyze their sources and then synthesize them in a compact piece of writing. As one of the skills that should be learned by EFL students that have responsibilities to express their ideas clearly and make readers understand about what they have written.

Many EFL students are still lacking in writing skill. This is supported by Adnan and Najogi (2019) that states in fact it is difficult to deny that students have weakness in writing, like in vocabulary, punctuation, structure, etc. This is also similar with Rahmatunisa (2014) that found many Indonesian students who still faced difficulties in EFL writing organizing paragraph,

remaining word classes, arranging the generic structure, making a conclusion, and putting punctuation. Moreover, they also commonly only translate the word or sentence in Bahasa to English in which it make the writing not as natural as the native language (Ariyanti, 2016). Therefore, it is important for the teacher to encourage and motivate the students in order to improve their writing by evaluating their writing continuously (Tehrani, 2018). Thus, providing feedback for them can be one of best way to do. One of feedback technique is peer feedback or peer reviewing. Peer feedback is one kind of feedback that adopts the learner-centered approach and learners' engagement in learning process (Nguyen, 2016). In addition, peer feedback also can provide the students chance to express their argument in valuable way to develop each other writing thus they can teach from their friends' work in order to improve their writing skill as well (Smith, 2017).

A previous study by Farrah in 2012 investigated students' attitudes towards peer feedback in process writing classes in addition to assessing the effectiveness of this teaching technique. This study use a pre-test and post-test as well as a pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire consisting of twenty statements follow a five-point scale. The results indicated that students viewed peer feedback as a worthwhile experience; it offered an opportunity for social interaction. It also improved students' writing skills. Furthermore, the technique enhanced students' critical thinking, confidence, creativity, and motivation. In addition, it helped in improving their assignments.

A similar study by Fatimah and Suharto in 2017, studied the students' writing skills before and after using peer feedback technique. They used the theory of peer feedback. Peer feedback can be defined as an activity of the students receiving feedback from other students. The students receive their friends' work and then review it and give comment or suggestion on it. A pre-test was given before the treatment, and three posttests were done after the treatment (peer feedback technique) was implemented. The result showed that the students' mean score improved from pretest to all posttests. The main score of pretest was 12.00, the first post-test was 15.57, the second post-test was 17.26, and in the third post-test the mean was 18.32. It indicated that peer is an effective technique to be used to improve the students' writing competency.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Writing in English is often claimed as the most complex skills compared to the other three skills. This is supported by Kusumaningrum, Suryono, and Prayogo (2018) that stated writing is a complex skill for EFL students that need some aspects to consider, such as the topic, the function of the text, and the prospective readers. Moreover, writing needs a very long process starting from outlining to publishing. Due to its complexity, feedback is seen to be an important part in writing process since it can lead to the students' better writing performance. It has been a consensus that teacher feedback is not practical to be given in a class with a big number of students. Thus, this challenges peer feedback to be implemented in the writing classroom. Peer feedback must be implemented in EFL writing class because it can helps the students to get opportunities and learn from their friends' work. The students also will feel freer to share their thought with their friend rather than with the teacher.

PURPOSE

Based on the problem identification, this paper aimed to describe the implementation of peer feedback and how it can increase the writing skill of English as Foreign Language students. This can help the EFL teacher make a classroom activity with peer feedback technique to make the students have a chance to increase their ability in writing and use it to assess their friend's work.

Furthermore, this paper also gave the solution for the impact that might occur during the implementation of peer feedback technique in the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing

Writing can be defined as a skill of expressing thought, feeling and also experience in a form of written product (Deveci, 2018). Further, according to kurikulum 2013, writing competency is a set of ability related to attitude, knowledge, and skill that need to be mastered by students after learning in a specific writing content. Thus, in this research, writing is a set of attitude, knowledge and skill in describing tourism object (Kemendikbud, 2015). Furthermore, this research will focus on writing text especially writing descriptive text. Descriptive text can be defined as a type of text that describes objects such as person/animal/object/place by giving a sensory detail in order to enable the reader to visualize it by (Muthoharoh&Anita, 2018).

Writing is a skill in which enables the students to recognize their own thoughts, knowledge, and feelings in the arrangements of words in detail and efficiently way (Nasir, Naqvi & Bhamani, 2013; Deveci, 2018). In addition, writing has also known as a discovery process of finding something new to write and to be expressed by using right word and sentence (Raimes, 1983). Moreover, the learners were also expected to be active to explore something new and to be creative in recognizing it through a writing product. Similarly with Defazio, Jones, Tennant and Hook (2010) state that writing can be a challenging skill for the learners since though writing the learners can explore and attempt their idea or thought on paper while developing their mastery in writing skill such as in grammar, and spelling.

Feedback

The term 'feedback' is used to describe the helpful information or criticism about prior action or behavior from an individual, communicated to another individual or a group who can use that information to adjust and improve current and future actions and behavior. Feedback is about giving information in a way that encourages the recipient to accept it, reflect on it, learn from it, and hopefully make changes for the better (Zhang, Song, Shen & Huang, 2014). Being able to give feedback is a skill that is useful in our personal and professional lives.

Feedback is important to the ongoing development of learners. Feedback occurs when an environment reacts to an action or behavior. Feedback is the most important single influence on student achievement. It is supported by Smith in 2017 that states a great deal more high quality feedback would be beneficial for students. Feedback is valuable information that will be used to make important decisions. There are two types of feedback namely positive feedback and negative feedback, both of them are very useful.

Peer Feedback

Peer feedback can be defined as an activity of the students receiving feedback from other students (Fatimah & Suharto, 2017). The students will get an understanding by exchange their work with their friend. Moreover, peer feedback technique peer feedback can encourage the students to work collaboratively and involve actively in learning process (Bradley & Thouëсны, 2017). In this research, peer feedback technique will be used as a techniques in order to improve the students' writing competence in writing a descriptive text about tourism and historical objects. Here, the students will be asked to make a descriptive text about tourism and historical object, later on they need to exchange their work with their friends in order to get a feedback. That is how peer feedback implemented.

Peer feedback also known as peer reviewing, peer revision, peer critiquing or peer evaluation, is a collaborative learning activity where the students can exchange their draft with their friend and have chance to give feedback to each other (Lei, 2017). This kind of feedback is claimed can enhance the students' participation in learning especially in order to develop their writing skill (Nguyen, 2016). According to Tehrani (2018:168), there are several advantages of that are provided by peer feedback technique such as since the students have to exchange their work with their friends when implement peer feedback, indirectly, it trains the students about how to give in the right way to give a good kind of comment or suggestion to develop each other. In addition, it also engages the students to work collaboratively with their friend while improving their writing skills. Moreover, it also can encourage the students to think critically toward something because of course when they want to give feedback to their friends work, they need to think, understand and analyze their friends' work. Last, the students are also given more chance to enhance individual reflection. So after they are given feedback from their friends, they may know their strength and weaknesses in writing.

METHOD

This paper is a library research. Library research is a data collection technique by conducting a review of books, literature, notes, and related reports (Nazir, 1988). It was supported by Sari & Asmendri (2020) that stated library research is a research had done by collecting information and data from reference books, similar results of previous research, articles, notes, and various journals, etc. in the library. The method of this study is descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics with a collection of data qualitatively (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). The data were collected through analyzing papers, articles, and journals.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Peer feedback is one alternative strategy that can be used by the teacher/lecturer when conducting teaching writing. Peer feedback could help to teach the students in identifying the features of good and poor writing project that had done by the others (Barkley, Cross & Major, 2005). Further, peer feedback also could help the students to increase their criticism, suggestion, and point of view that could produce a meaningful improvement for other student's writing (Andianto, 2014). Thus, the implementation of peer feedback in the classroom offers beneficial effects for the students either as the writers or as the readers. It is also very useful for both the teacher and students. Here are the reasons why use peer feedback in writing classroom.

The first one is cooperative work. The procedure of the strategy enables the students to work cooperatively in a group/peer. The students can give comments on their classmates' writing for better quality writing. The second one is minimize errors. Peer feedback can be one solution to minimize the errors the students usually make in their writing before submit their writing draft to the teacher. They also can learn how to revise their own text based on comments from peers. It is consider with Sholihah (2015) that states providing feedback and revisions during the process of writing can be more effective rather than at the end of the process. The third one is saving time. When a teacher has a lot of students in the class and has many classes to teach, of course it will take much time in correcting the students' writing product. It will be another problem that the teacher faces during the teaching especially in teaching writing. Therefore, by conducting peer feedback in writing learning it means the students' work already corrected by their peer so it may have a little mistake left. So the teacher can save much time in assessing the students' work.

However, some problems might be appeared when implementing peer feedback strategy. There is a tendency that some students prefer to rely on the teachers' response. As a result, they will ignore their peers' feedback. Besides, when providing feedback, students tend to focus on sentence level problem rather than ideas and organization. It might appear from the assumption that good writing is writing in which has rhetorical patterns. Moreover, students might not do assessment on their friend's work because of their laziness to read or something else. Thus, to make sure that the students really assess and give feedback on their friend's work, the teacher can ask the students to read their feedback in front of the class. If the time is not enough, the teacher can ask the students to write their feedback on their friend's work and submit both the first work and the revised one. Accordingly, teacher's assistances is needed to ensure that the students know how to give feedback and how to revise their own drafts based on their peers' feedback for the better writing quality.

The Implementation

Peer feedback can be used when teaching recount text in senior high school for grade 10. Of course teacher has to teach the students first how to make the recount text, including the generic structure and the tenses. The teacher asks the students to make their own recount text using their own words. The students can make the recount text in any topic they want. After that the students are asked to switch their work with their partner and assess and give feedback to their partner's work. The students can revise their recount text based on the feedback given by their peer. Below is the detail description of activities in the classroom.

Initial meeting:

- The students are assigned to do prewriting activity.
- The students write down single words or phrases about a topic within 5 minutes.
- The students developed and organized their ideas based on the topic. Then the students were ordered to write a minimum of 100 words for their first draft through elaborating their ideas.

Following meeting:

- The students read one example of paragraph with some errors on grammar, spelling, preposition, and mechanics (punctuation, spelling, capitalization).
- The students were asked to discuss in groups and give feedback on paragraph by filling the revising checklist as the guidelines.

Checklist example:

Indikator	Deskripsi	Peer Check
Capitalization and Punctuation	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓

Paragraph writing techniques	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓
Spelling	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓
Verb suitability	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓
The use of tenses	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓
The use of conjunction	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓
The use of vocabulary	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓
The use of pronoun	All true Almost all true Partly true Almost all false All false	✓
Note: The use of tenses is not consistent.		

Last meeting:

- The students are asked to discuss the feedback and revise their first draft. The students got the feedback from their peers to revise their first draft and rewrite their draft as their final draft.
- The students submitted the final draft. Finally the reflection is done after they had learned the first, second and the third meeting.

THE ANTICIPATED IMPACT

Peer feedback is a good technique to use in writing teaching for English as foreign language students. By using peer feedback technique in writing, the peer can help the writer with ideas to move the writing forward when the writer stuck. The students can work cooperatively in a

group/peer. The students can give comments on their classmates' writing for better quality of writing. Peers ask for clarification about something that is confusing or about missing information. It can increase the students' curiosity as the readers. The writers it can give a chance to clarify and increase their critical thinking during the writing process. According to Nasir, Naqvi & Bhamani, 2013; Deveci, 2018 writing is a skill in which enables the students to recognize their own thoughts, knowledge, and feelings in the arrangements of words in detail and efficiently way. Therefore, peers can give their emotional response to the writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, the use of peer feedback in teaching writing for English as foreign language students is very useful and effective for both the students and teacher. The implementation of peer feedback in the classroom offers beneficial effects for the students either as the writers or as the readers. The writers can have a correction of their writing product from their peer, and the readers/reviewers can increase their knowledge and writing skill. Peer feedback can be one solution to minimize the errors the students usually make in their writing before submit their writing draft to the teacher. They also can learn how to revise their own text based on comments from peers. The procedure of the strategy enables the students to work cooperatively in a group/peer. The teacher can save much time in assessing the students' work by conducting peer feedback in writing learning because the students' work already corrected by their peer so it may have a little mistake left.

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