THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PEER FEEDBACK IN EFL WRITING CLASS

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menginvestigasi penggunaan *peer feedback* di kelas menulis. Pesertanya adalah mahasiswa EFL salah satu perguruan tinggi swasta di Surabaya yang mengambil mata kuliah penulisan esai tahun ajaran 2020-2021. Studi ini menemukan bahwa penerapan umpan balik rekan dianggap sebagai kegiatan positif untuk kinerja menulis. Siswa lebih menyukai *peer feedback* karena beberapa alasan, seperti: mekanisme penulisan, pembelajaran kolaboratif, dan kepercayaan diri. Sebagian besar siswa mengemukakan bahwa umpan balik rekan mengacu pada memberikan komentar dan saran daripada menilai pekerjaan satu sama lain. Mereka menyampaikan bahwa dari beberapa aspek penulisan, tata bahasa merupakan aspek terpenting yang harus diperbaiki. Mereka menegaskan bahwa tata bahasa sangat penting karena ia menentukan seberapa formal tulisan seharusnya dan merupakan aspek penting untuk memastikan maksud penulis tersampaikan. Aspek lainnya adalah pengembangan paragraf. Ini adalah aspek mendasar lain dari keterampilan menulis karena menghubungkan ide penulis dengan pembaca. Lebih lanjut, siswa menegaskan bahwa peer feedback dapat digunakan sebagai sarana untuk mengkonseptualisasi ulang pemikiran siswa. Hal ini merupakan kontribusi yang berarti bagi siswa untuk berpikir kritis dan untuk meningkatkan kemandirian. Oleh karena itu, peer feedback memberikan kesempatan yang lebih luas kepada siswa untuk mengembangkan tulisan yang selanjutnya mengarah pada penentuan siswa sebagai pembelajar mandiri.

Kata Kunci : *peer feedback, menulis.*

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of peer feedback in writing class. The participants were EFL students in a private university in Surabaya who took essay writing subject in academic year 2020-2021. This study found that the implementation of peer feedback was perceived as a positive activity for writing performance. Students preferred peer feedback because of several reasons, such as: to detect writing problems, to write better in terms of grammar, to analyze writing and paragraph development and spelling. Most students wrote that peer feedback refers to providing comments and suggestions rather than judging each other work. They found that from several aspects of writing, grammar is the most important aspect that must be corrected among other. They confirmed that grammar is vital because it decides on how formal the writing should be and it is a crucial aspect for ensuring the writer's point is getting across. Another aspect is paragraph development. It is another fundamental aspect of writing since it links the writer's ideas to the readers. Furthermore, students affirmed that peer feedback can be used as a means to re-conceptualize students' thinking. This is a meaningful contribution for students critical thinking and to improve autonomy. Therefore, peer feedback facilitates students wider opportunity to develop writing which further lead to self-determination learner.

Keywords: *peer feedback, writing.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is regarded as an essential skill on students' language learning. In English as foreign language context many learners find difficulties. This is due to writing requires a certain amount of L2 or foreign background knowledge about rhetorical organization, appropriate language use or specific vocabulary to communicate ideas (Zacharias, 2007). There have been many efforts to assist students improve writing skill and motivate students for completing the writing tasks. One of attempts is providing feedback. Many studies have been conducted to investigate the role of feedback in L2 teaching and learning (Ahmadi, Maftoon, & Mehrdad, 2012; Cheng, Liang, & Tsai, 2015; Huisman, Saab, Van Driel, & Van Den Broek, 2018; Khalil, 2018). However, the issue of providing feedback in writing is deliberated. There have been some evidences that providing corrective feedback may play encouraging result in EFL especially in writing. However, it seems that the concern on this work is still essential to definitively adopt the claim. In fact this last concern which has motivated the present study. In this study, students were given opportunity to determine their own partner in conducting peer feedback. The consideration to apply this procedure is to provide an enjoyable

learning environment for students in completing the writing task. Enjoyable learning context not only gives a greater autonomy to the students in a friendly and joyful way but also creates the right learning atmosphere (Kumar, 2016). Providing comfortable learning can be done through several activities such as role-play, experiments, and group discussions which conducted inside and outside the classroom (Anggoro, S. et al. 2017). Thus, the present study investigates the role of peer feedback on EFL students' essay writing at one of private universities in Surabaya.

In EFL writing class, providing feedback to students can be in the form of written commentary, error correction, offering the kind of individualized attention that is otherwise rarely possible under normal classroom conditions (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Each type of feedback is intended to provide valuable information for students in English writing. It is expected that after having receiving feedback students' writing performance can improve.

RESEARCH METHOD

This is an illustrative case study on EFL university students' in peer feedback activities, which was conducted in writing class in a private university in Surabaya. An illustrative case study was used in this study to "describe a situation or a phenomenon, what is happening with it, and why it is happening" (Hayes, et al, 2015). They added that the aim was to exemplify a picture about the topic for the readers (Hayes, et al., 2015).

In this study, students in writing class were asked to draft essay and conducted peer feedback activities. Before they conducted the first peer feedback activity, the students will be asked to have their own partner. There were two drafts of students writing; first draft was original writing which provided peer's comment or correction and second draft was the revision. Each students was asked to share the work on google classroom (GCR) so the lecturer monitor students' progress.

Deals with the concerns on students' writing performance, this study observed all the students who take essay writing class. The participants were all English majors who had learned English as a foreign language for at least one and half a year at university. The data of the present study were in the form of students' writing product that should be provided feedback from partner and the results of questionnaire.

The procedure of research implementation can be described as follows: (a) students were given guidance about peer review, (b) students found partner, (c) students constructed outline and essay writing based on provided topics, (d) students shared outline and essay, (e) students submitted their work, (f) students revised their work based on peer feedback, (g) students submitted the revision.

Another data were questionnaire. The questionnaire consist of ten questions to identify students' opinion about the implementation of peer

feedback in writing class. Questionnaire was used to record students' responses on the implementation of peer feedback in writing class. Students were asked to fill out questionnaire at the end of the program. Then, the results of questionnaire were analyzed and presented. After that, this was used to draw conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Peer Feedback Implementation in Writing Class

The aim of the present study was to examine the implementation of peer feedback in essay writing. The study also purposed to determine the role of peer feedback in writing instruction. In this study, students have a preference to get feedback from peers for several reasons: to detect writing problems, to write better in terms of grammar, to analyze writing and paragraph development and spelling. This in line with the work of Dewi et al (2019) that the application of peer feedback was perceived as a positive activity for writing performance.

In this present study, peer feedback activity was done in several meetings but the study used one meeting to be discussed here. Initially, lecturer should ensure that students has fully understood the criteria of peer feedback activity (Spiller, 2012). Then students needed to find their peer to share the essay. After that, the students were required to create an essay based on the topics provided by the lecturer. Next, students have to examine the essay and provided comments and corrections. Finally, it has to be returned back to a friend in order to be revised. After revising the previous friend should recheck the essay to consider the improvement. The role of the lecturer in this activity was as the facilitator and she had to be ready when the students asked questions.

Providing feedback in EFL writing class can be in the form of written commentary, error correction, and offering the kind of individualized responsiveness that is otherwise rarely possible under normal classroom context (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Most of the students wrote that providing feedback is the activity of providing comments and suggestions that they receive from classmates rather than judging each other work. They found that from several aspects of writing, grammar is considered to be the most important aspect that must be corrected among other. They confirmed that grammar is vital because it decides how formal the writing need to be. In addition, even in informal writing, grammar is crucial for ensuring the writer's point is getting across.

The followings are sample of evidences taken from students' peer feedback in writing activity:

"The plural verb doesn't appear to agree with the singular subject on the last step. Consider changing the verb form for subject-verb agreement" (Participant 1)

"It seems that preposition use is incorrect here, you can use "…in the…" (Participant 4)

"It seems that this sentence contains a series of words, phrases, or clauses. Consider inserting a comma to separate the elements". (Participant 2)

Those were some examples of students' comments, error corrections, and suggestions from peer feedback activity. The students had autonomy to give comments, to provide error corrections, and to present suggestions based on provided writing rubric previously given by the lecturer. This was beneficial to broaden their knowledge of their writing especially grammar aspects.

Another essential aspect of writing need to be corrected is paragraph development. It is another fundamental aspect of writing since it links the writer's idea to be transmitted to the readers. Paragraph development helps the writer organize thoughts and communicate the information she/he is trying to convey better. When students obtained corrections, comments, and suggestions from peer, these are constructive input for paragraph development of the essay. Participant 6 explained:

"Here is not explained the conclusion part, and there is no any concluding part" (Participant 6).

Similarly, participant 7 affirmed that:

"This sentence can be added as a conclusion because this paragraph does not include the conclusions listed in the paragraph" (Participant 7).

From the above evidences, this can be seen that peer feedback activity facilitates students to share knowledge to the others, especially related to paragraph development. Peer had tried not only to give comment deals with partner's paragraph, but also offer a solution that some sentences can be best employed as conclusion. This is a valuable input for paragraph construction in writing. In another word, peer feedback has assisted students' construct the paragraph.

Further, students confirmed that peer feedback can be used as a means to analyze the writing. Based on input from peer, they are able to re-conceptualize students' thinking. This is meaningful contribution for stimulating students think critically and to improve autonomy. In other words, from peer

feedback, students have a wide opportunity to re-construct and develop their writing which further will lead to self-determination learner. This is in line with the work of (Bijami, et al, 2013) that peer feedback has taken a notable part in writing instruction as it provides an adaptable platform to help students writing practice.

When students provided comments and corrections to the partners' writing, they are trying to identify others' writing quality. The writing quality are adapted from (Walvoord, 2005) which includes originality, clarity, organization, support/reasoning, and use of sources/documentation. In other words, through peer feedback, students believe that their writing can be improved in terms of writing mechanisms. Initially, students get feedback in the form of error corrections or comments from peers. Colleagues indicated some parts of the writing that need to be corrected and some comments to confirm the writing or provided a solution regarded to the problem identified. In addition, the application of peer feedback stimulates students' think critically. This happens when students have received feedback and comments from colleagues related to writing in terms of the presentation of ideas related to content of writing. Furthermore, peer feedback provides opportunities for students to do collaborative learning. After providing feedback students are required to revise and give the revision version back to the peer. This activity facilitates them to have collaborative learning because they have to work with partners to complete the peer feedback activity.

Difficulties in Practicing Peer-assessment

Peer feedback implementation has several obstacles, including time constraints and limited capacity of students' abilities. Deals with the time allocation, 2 credits (100 minutes) for essay writing is not enough for students to have peer feedback activity. Therefore, students assumed that peer feedback is a time-consuming activity. As a result, they asked the lecturer extended time for completing the task. Besides, students' capability to be another difficulty in implementing peer feedback. Higher achiever students will easily detect and diagnose other's work and provide correction or comment. On the other hand, lower achiever students will appreciate others' work instead of detecting other's work. This is to be another problem in the implementation of peer feedback in writing.

CONCLUSION

This study found that peer feedback is valuable teaching aids to facilitate writing practice. This activity is crucial in several ways; writing mechanism, stimulates students' think critically and facilitates collaborative learning. Aspects of writing which have significant impact by the implementation of peer feedback are grammar and paragraph development.

SUGGESTION

Based on the results of the present study, the writers stipulate a recommendation that a peer feedback is a potential strategy in teaching essay writing. The next research can apply peer feedback in teaching writing. The instructors can equip students by providing writing rubric and writing guidance as a reference for providing feedback more accurately.

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