



Peer Feedback Technique in Writing

Descriptive Text: Is it effective?

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to prove whether the implementation of Peer Feedback could improve students' writing skills. The design of this study was quasi-experimental. The population was the seventh-grade of SMP Negeri 1 Palu, which consisted of 326 students and purposive random sampling was used to decide Experimental and control group. The researchers used test to collect the data in term of pretest and posttest. However, only the experimental class got treatment of peer feedback while the control group got other treatments. Organization, Content, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic were focus of this research. After implementing peer feedback, the result presents that the students mean score of the experimental group (81.55) on the post-test is higher than the score of the control group. (71.96). It was different from the result of pretest, which the mean score of control group was statistically higher than experimental class. Furthermore, the significance value (2-tailed) is 0.00 lower than 0.05. Thus, it can be interpreted that peer feedback technique effectively improve students' writing skill. As a conclusion, peer feedback is a recommended technique in teaching writing.

Keywords: *Descriptive text, Improving, Peer feedback, writing skill*

Introduction

As one of the productive skills that should be mastered among the four language skills, writing is considered as the most sophisticated skill for English Foreign Language (EFL) students. It involves the process of using symbols consisting of words and mechanics that are grammatically organized to communicate or deliver people's ideas, feelings, and thoughts into a good sentence and paragraph. In addition, writing is categorized as a complex skill that requires many aspects; they are vocabulary, grammar, organization, and mechanics. To produce an intelligible text, knowledge of writing plays a crucial role (Rofiqoh et al.,

2022). Thus, if the writers will produce a qualified writing, they should have good system knowledge and mastery.

Mastering the writing process in every aspect of it is complexity essential. However, the most trouble with English writing is caused by several factors such as organization, vocabulary, grammar as well as spelling which is the most crucial one (Harahap, 2023). Therefore, it is hard for students to produce a good piece of writing without better knowledge about the aspects. Since English is not their mother tongue, then students are not yet fluent in writing skills (Syifa, Al-Baekani, and Srisudarso 2022). As Humarani, Gailea, and Nurhaedah (2023) argue that students struggle with how to start their writing even though it is only a simple text. It happened because students did not have enough understanding about writing. The challenges of writing for almost EFL students are anxious about using proper grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, structure, and other elements. Thus, students are confused about acknowledging grammar using personal pronouns and subject-verb agreement. Yoandita (2019) states that students still have problems with a lack of vocabulary. Hence, students cannot even finish their writing.

Regarding the learning outcomes in phase D of the independent curriculum, students are expected to be able to write various types of text, one of them is descriptive text. In contrast, the researchers found a number of eleventh-grade students have difficulties in writing descriptive text. First, they were rigorous to get ideas; thus, they were confused how to begin their writing and make it concrete between the text content and structure. Second, students had difficulties to construct grammatical sentences. In addition, related to the students' limited vocabulary, they put wrong spelling and punctuation in a text.

Concerning the problems, the teacher needs to carry out an assessment to examine students' performance and progress in writing. Assessment means the teacher can provide feedback on students' writing. According to Hyland and Hyland (2006), most people agree that receiving feedback is essential to encouraging and completing learning. Feedback is essential for students in the learning process because it allows the students to identify what needs to be repaired. Thus, it can clearly and concisely prevent student' confusion.

Nowadays, teacher is not the only one person who can help and teach students in the learning process, their peers also can be one of the learning sources. The example is peer feedback. Richards and Schmidt (2002) define peer feedback as an undertaking in the revising stage of writing in which students get feedback about their writing from other students. Through the use of peer feedback, students can participate in the evaluation process and become more aware of the activities involved in teaching and learning (Mercader, Ion, Diza, and Anna 2020). According to Mualifah (2021), the peer assessment enable students to collaborate with their peers. After receiving their peer's writing, the students evaluate it and

conduct feedback.

Peer feedback is a form of student-centered learning, which is a learning approach that students position as a learning subject, not as an object. It gives a chance to the students be more active in the learning process during the class. Based on Widyastuti, Suryaman, and Puspitaloka (2021), peer feedback can foster a productive learning environment where students can enhance their writing. By implementing the peer feedback technique in the classroom, students can practice writing daily basis.

Method

In this research, the researchers used quasi-experimental design, which is divided into two groups, there were experimental and control group. Since the instrument of this research was a writing test, the students were given a pre-test and post-test. After conducting pretest, the researchers conducted treatment for both of group, peer feedback for experimental group and conventional technique for control group. Furthermore, after collecting the data of pretest and posttest, next these data were analyzed by using software SPSS 22.

Results

After collecting and analyzing pretest and posttest of both of groups, the following results interpret as follow:

**The Mean Score of Students in Pre-test
Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Pre-test				
Experimental	32	25	75	51.21
Pre-test Control	32	25	77.78	54.81
Valid N (listwise)	32			

Based on the pre-test result above, it can be seen that the mean score pre-test of control was higher than the mean score of experimental groups. Next, the researcher also conducted post-test.

**The Mean Score of Students in Post-test
 Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Post-test				
Experimental	32	55.56	100	81.55
Post-test Control	32	45.83	91.67	71.96
Valid N (listwise)	32			

The table of post-test presents a significantly different from both of group. The data convey that the average writing ability of students in experimental is higher than in the control group.

Furthermore, the researchers utilized the Kolmogorov normality test to determine if the data had a normal distribution after getting the mean scores from the pre-test and post-test. The table conveys the results of the normality test as follow:

Tests of Normality Used Kolmogorov

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Pre-test						
Experimental	0.126	32	.200	.955	32	.197
Post-test						
Experimental	0.202	32	.002	.002	32	.042
Pre-test Control	0.163	32	.029	.029	32	.006
Post-test Control	0.177	32	.012	.012	32	.013

After using Kolmogorov-Simonov formula, the data is not normally distributed. Thus, the researchers implemented a non-parametric test.

Test Statistics^a

	Post-test Experiment – Pre-test Experiment	Post-test Control – Pre-test Control
Z	-4.924 ^b	-4.744 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

According to the table above, the asymp.sig value is $0.00 < 0.05$, therefore the hypothesis is accepted. Then, testing hypothesis was analyzed by using the paired sample test as follows:

Paired Samples Test

		Mean	Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test-Post-test	-30.339	10.895	1.926	-34.267 -26.411	-15.752	31	.000

The preceding table’s computation results indicate that the significance value (2-tailed) is 0.00. It is clearly evident that Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected regard to the criteria of making decisions and the hypothesis. The significance value (0.00) is lower than 0.05. As a consequence, the finding demonstrates that students writing ability taught by peer feedback is better than the students which taught by traditional approach. In summary, there was an apparent variance in seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Palu writing descriptive text before and after using peer feedback.

Discussion

In this part, the researchers will discuss the data on the finding. The researchers found that student’s experimental pre-test was lower than control group. The students of experimental got difficulty in harmonizing between the identification paragraph and the description paragraph, as well as difficulty in making sure that sentence by sentence is organized well. Further, they did not write it completely and clearly. Which it is related to the content and organization aspects of writing. In addition, they still did not know the language features of descriptive text namely using simple present tense, but for some students used past tense or present continuous.

Furthermore, the most mistakes made by students were related to mechanics in writing. They forgot to put a period at the end of a sentence, or even put punctuation incorrectly. Not using capital letters according to the rules, for example not starting a sentence with a capital letter. As well as incorrect spelling of

sentences. All of these are simple things that students pay little attention to when writing. It were strengthened by Irine and Misrita (2020) who analyzed that grammar and mechanics in writing descriptive text was the most difficulty the students faced. It seems that the students were still lack of knowledge about the component of writing

Then, after knowing the students' ability in pre-test, the researchers treated them by using peer feedback to experimental group. During treatment, they begin to understand how to make sentences complete and harmonious, use the correct personal pronouns, and use the simple present correctly. Apart from that, they also pay more attention to the mechanics of writing. This happens because in implementing peer feedback, the students do not only focus on their perspective but also their friends' perspective.

Thus, they know their mistakes are and they do not make the same mistakes again. Peer feedback facilitates students to revise and fix the basic problem more often (Gao et al., 2019). Laksana (2021) claims that by using peer feedback, students can easily identify their weakness. Furthermore, they can reduce anxiety in writing because teacher does not involve during the process. They can also build up their social interaction. Peer feedback is effective to improve students' writing skill than teacher' feedback(Suryani et al., 2020). As result, the students can produce qualified writing.

These arguments are also supported by the result of the post-test. It reveals that the students' writing of experimental class is significantly change than the control class. Most students are able to write with almost correct content, good organization, grammatical sentence, correct vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The students will be easy to master the aspect of writing through peer feedback because they have many opportunities to learn and apply(Amalia, 2018). Peer feedback really help the student in identifying and revising sentence errors, spelling and the use of the word (Zhang & Hyland, 2023). Thus, it can be interpreted that implementing peer feedback in writing descriptive text is effective in improving the writing skills of the seventh-grade students.

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to prove whether the implementation of peer feedback could improve the student writing skills of the seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Palu. The researchers used a quasi-experimental design which consisted of experimental and control group. Then, students were given pre-test and post-test. As a result of the pre-test, the experimental group got a mean score (of 51.28), while the control group got a mean score (of 54.81). It implies that writing skill of control in pre-test were better than the experimental group. In contrast, the result of the post-test showed differences. The mean score of the experimental group is (81.55), while the control group scores (71.96). It indicates

that peer feedback provides progressively improvement toward students' writing skill. Hence, there is a positive effect on students' writing skills of the seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Palu.

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