

PEER ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS OF A WRITING CLASS

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the students' ability to assess peer's written work. Many studies found the advantages of peer assessment like the speed of students' learning. On the other hand, many studies also found the disadvantages of peer assessment like poor quality feedback from the students. This study was designed in qualitative research. The students of X graders in one of Senior High School in Mojokerto were observed during class. The students' grammar and vocabulary which was corrected by peer were analysed to answer first and second problem and the students' response during interview was transcribed and interpreted to answer the third problem. The result of this study showed that most of the students faced some problems when conducting peer assessment in the writing class. The students did not acknowledge some grammatical errors and vocabulary errors in the students' written works. The students also did not assess based on the grammar use and vocabulary use in descriptive text because the teacher did not give explanation about criteria of grammar and vocabulary that must be assessed by the students. Moreover, the students also gave good score to their peer without certain criteria of the score. In conclusion, the students faced some problems in assessing peer's written work. The biggest problem found is the lack of student's ability of sufficient knowledge. It makes the validity of peer assessment doubtfully to be used for measuring the students' performance in this class.

Keywords: Peer Assessment, Writing, Grammatical Error, Vocabulary Error

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti kemampuan siswa dalam menilai tulisan teman sejawat. Banyak penelitian yang telah menemukan keuntungan dari penilaian teman sejawat, seperti kecepatan pemahaman siswa terhadap matapelajaran. Namun, ada juga penelitian yang menemukan bahwa penilaian oleh teman sejawat mempunyai kekurangan, seperti kualitas masukan yang buruk dari siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Siswa kelas sepuluh MAN Mojokerto diteliti untuk mendapatkan beberapa data yang diperlukan. Struktur bahasa dan pemilihan kata dari tulisan siswa yang telah dikoreksi teman sejawat dianalisis untuk menjawab rumusan masalah pertama dan kedua. Kemudian, jawaban siswa dalam wawancara disalin dan dideskripsikan untuk menjawab rumusan masalah ketiga. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan, bahwa banyak siswa menemukan kesulitan dalam pelaksanaan penilaian teman sejawat. Siswa tidak mengenali beberapa kesalahan struktur bahasa dan pemilihan kata. Kemudian, siswa tidak menilai tulisan teman sejawat sesuai dengan ciri kebahasaan dari teks deskriptif. Selain itu, siswa juga memberi skor kepada teman sejawat tanpa pedoman kriteria penilaian. Hal-hal ini membuat hasil penilaian teman sejawat diragukan untuk mengukur kemampuan siswa. Sehingga, dapat disimpulkan bahwa siswa menghadapi beberapa kesulitan untuk menilai tulisan teman sejawat. Kesulitan terbesar siswa adalah kurangnya pengetahuan yang dibutuhkan untuk menilai tulisan teman sejawat. Hal ini membuat kebenaran dari hasil penilaian teman sejawat diragukan untuk digunakan sebagai pedoman pengukuran kemampuan siswa di kelas tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Penilaian Teman Sejawat, Penulisan, Kesalahan Struktur Bahasa, Kesalahan Kata

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the ways to communicate. Besides speaking, writing can be used to deliver the message. Fairbairn and Winch (2011) states that writing is transferring the meaning by selecting words and putting them together in written form. People need to learn how to write because writing is not only putting the words together but it also needs meaning.

In fact, among the four skills students get more difficulties in writing because the process of writing requires good mastery of grammar, vocabulary, organization, and other aspects in written form in order to create a communicative written text. As Brown states that the process of writing requires some competencies and it is different from speaking (Brown, 2001). Written products are the result of thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skills (Brown, 2001). It means that writing is complex skill that needs to be

treated differently because there are many aspects of writing that have to be mastered well. Many students do not want to write because they lack confidence (Harmer, 2001). The students feel they cannot write well because they do not have any confidence to do it. Therefore, the teaching learning process in writing class should be more effective and valuable.

In the teaching and learning process there are two kinds of activity that done by the teacher. According to Susanto (2015) there are two kinds of activity in the class; teaching activity and assessment. It defines that the teacher not only teaches in the class but also assesses. Usually during teaching learning process the whole activity was dominated by the teacher and there is a little interaction between teacher and students.

However, when the teacher is doing assessment, both teacher and students are involved in the teaching and learning process. According to Susanto (2015) when the teacher and the students are doing the assessing activity then there will be the interaction between the teacher and all the students, the teacher and the small group of students, and the teacher and the individual. During assessment activity the teacher are collecting some information about the students and trying to discover the solution.

In the teaching learning activity of writing class, the teacher should consider those activity; teaching and assessment. Besides the clear explanation the students also need supervision. To supervise and monitor whether the students do well in the process of writing, the teacher needs to apply an assessment therefore the teacher knows how the students are doing. The feedback from assessment should be effectively used to improve teaching and learning. It should enable evaluation of the extent to which learners have learned and the extent to which they can demonstrate that learning (Brown, 2003).

Cheng and warren (2005) (as cited in Azarnoosh 2013) there are several assessments conducted in the classroom such as performance assessment, portfolio assessment, self assessment and peer assessment. In the self assessment and peer assessment students play the major role in that activity. However, in this research the researcher only focused on peer assessment. Through peer assessment the students assess each other works. It can encourage students to take greater responsibility for their learning, for example, by encouraging engagement with assessment criteria and reflection of their own performance and that of their peers. Peer assessment requires students to provide either feedback or grades to their peers on a product or a performance, based on the criteria of excellence for that product or event which

student may have been involved in determining (Falchikov 2007) cited in (Spillers 2012).

The previous study was conducted by (Kumalasari, 2013). She conducted her study concerning about peer assessment in English performance. She found that the students were unable to deliver their comments directly to their peers because the students' inability to communicate using English. Another reason was their unwillingness to get involved in the peer assessment activity. In the end she concluded that peer assessment is effective and useful to improve their future performance by the assessment that they received from other peers and give contribution to the students in participating in the activity actively. Yet, in (Kumalasari, 2013) research she claimed that there was some improvement of students' performance from implementing peer assessment but she also found that students have some difficulties in giving comment to their peer and they are unwilling to do the peer assessment. It shows that students have some problem in implementing peer assessment. On the other hand, (Sultana, 2009) also conducted the research about peer assessment and found that the students mostly reluctant to correct their friends' errors because correcting other friends' errors may harm the relationship. Moreover, sometimes the students do not value the peer's knowledge therefore they do not revise their writing based on their peer's feedback.

According to Susanto (2015) Peer assessment cannot be used for assessing the student's performance because the reliability, the validity, the ability of student's evaluation, and the honesty for giving the evaluation are still doubtful. Sometimes, students are fear and reluctant to give low score or bad evaluation to other students because they are friends. Moreover, students also cannot be sure to evaluate other students because they have not had the ability yet.

Therefore, the researcher held investigation in MAN Mojokerto. The teacher in MAN Mojokerto already conducted peer assessment in her writing class frequently. Yet, the researcher only focused the grammar and vocabulary element because as the teacher's instruction the students only have to assess the grammatical error and the vocabulary errors. The teacher considered that the students' mastery of vocabulary was limited and hopefully through peer assessment activity the students can enrich their mastery of vocabulary. Moreover, among five components of writing grammar is considered to be difficult component to be analyzed by the students. So, the students needed to be trained continuously in order to sharpen their mastery of grammar. Hence, the researcher intended to investigate

PEER ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS OF A WRITING CLASS

whether the students actually are able to assess their peer written work with their sufficient knowledge.

Regarding those facts, the researcher outlines three research questions, “To what extent does the student To what extent does the student apply peer assessment to correct student’s grammatical errors in writing?”, “To what extent does the student apply peer assessment to correct student’s vocabularies errors in writing?”, and “How are students’ responses in implementing peer assessment in writing class?”.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the research questions, the researcher was conducted qualitative research. The researcher decided to conduct qualitative research based on the observation held. The aim of this study is to describe and analyze the application of student’s peer assessment of grammatical errors in writing, the application of student’s peer assessment of vocabularies errors in writing and the students’ response toward the implementation of peer assessment. According to Cohen, et al (2007) qualitative research aims to describe, to summarize, to prove, to examine the application, and to operate the same problem in different context.

The researcher chose six of students’ written work as the data to be analyzed. These students’ written works were from six students who acted as commentator who assessed their peer written work. These six students represented various level of students’ English proficiency. They were two students with excellent English proficiency, two students with average English proficiency, and two students with poor English proficiency. Meanwhile, the researcher also chose 12 students for the interview to represent the students. These 12 students represented various level of students’ English proficiency. They were four students with excellent English proficiency, four students with average English proficiency, and four students with poor English proficiency.

The data was taken from observation, field note, and interview. The observation here done for analyzing the student’s work. The students’ grammar which was corrected by their peer and the students’ vocabulary which was corrected by their peer were analysed to answer the first research question and second research question. And the students’ response towards the interview question was transcribed and interpreted to answer the third research question.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE STUDY

In this part, there three points that are discussed. Firstly, student’s ability to correct grammatical errors of peer’s written work. Secondly, student’s ability to correct vocabulary errors of peer’s written work. Thirdly, students’ responses in implementing peer assessment.

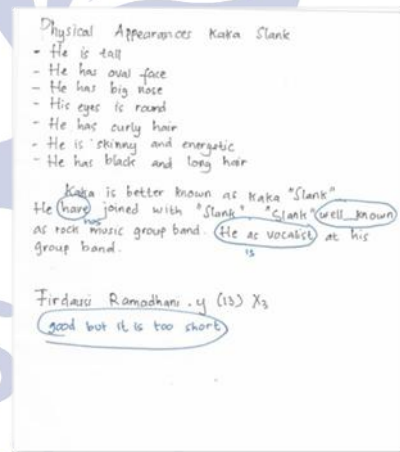
Student’s Ability to Correct Grammatical Errors of Peer’s Written Work.

The first problem that was related with the application of student’s peer assessment of grammatical errors in writing was the activity of the students when the students acted as assessor in editing stage. The students gave their peer’s written work comment, score, correction, and suggestion. Brown (2001) states peer assessment is one of the types of assessment that involves the students to join the process of giving assessment to other friends. The aim of peer assessment is to help the other students with the revision that was given by their peers.

The researcher analyzed the result of students’ assessment of their peer. The researcher chose some students to represent various level of students’ English proficiency. They were students with excellent English proficiency, students with average English proficiency, and students with poor English proficiency.

First, Excellent student (SE) assessed the text by giving correction, score, and comment about the grammatical error. For example, he have joined, it should be he has joined, then he as vocalist, it should be he is as vocalist. SE also commented that the text was too short and gave good score (illustration 1).

(Illustration1)

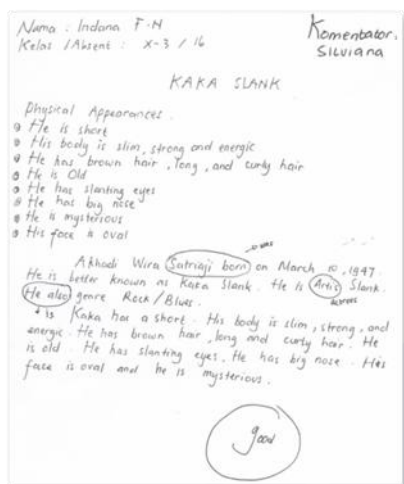


First, the student concerned about the grammatical error (illustration 1). But when doing correction the student was mistaken when corrected the sentence like SLANK well known , it should be SLANK is well known. Therefore, the students commented that their peer’s writing was too short and it should be longer. The students only corrected the verb agreement in this text. The students were not sure even did not understand those mistakes because the ability to recognize those kinds of mistakes is still not enough so no wonder that student made those mistakes.

Second, the researcher analyzed the text that was assessed by the student with average English proficiency (SA). SA assessed by giving correction and score (illustration 2). SA assessed some grammatical errors.

For example, Sutriaji born on March, it should be Sutriaji was born on March. Then he also genre rock/ blues, it should be he is also genre rock/blues. And SA gave good score.

(Illustration 2)



SA assessed the verb agreement errors (illustration 2). SE recognized some errors like Sutriaji born on March and He also genre Rock/Blues. But, SE did not correct the sentence He also genre Rock/Blues. SE only corrected the missing of auxiliary (is) but SE did not recognize the student made mistake of the word order like genre Rock/Blues, it should be Rock/Blues genre or genre of Rock/Blues. And the sentence Kaka has a short it is incorrect because the student missed a noun. However, it was not related with the grammar rule use in descriptive text.

Third, the researcher analyzed the students with poor English proficiency (SP) who assessed their peer texts. SP assessed by giving correction and score. SP corrected only one sentence. He success of SLANK Tidak Pernah Mati movies. It should be he is success of SLANK Tidak Pernah Mati movies. And she also gave her peer perfect score (illustration 3).

(Illustration 3)



SP commented the grammatical error of verb agreement like He success of SLANK Tidak Pernah Mati movies. It should be he got success of SLANK Tidak

Pernah Mati movies. But SP was mistaken with the word success. Success is not verb but it is noun. SP also did not correct and give comment to the sentence he has wrinkles face. Because it should be he has wrinkled face. Wrinkle is not an adjective. Then he has black, long, and curly hair. It should be corrected he has black, curly, and long hair. However, she gave her peer perfect score. SP made many mistakes when assessing the peer's text. SP could not recognize some errors even SP gave wrong correction. The lack ability is one of the reasons the student made mistake. The subjectivity also made the student gave perfect score without considering those errors.

From the explanation above the researcher took some example of the students' text which was corrected by their peer. From the analysis above, the researcher concluded that most the students did not assess their peer according to the language feature of descriptive text. Kumalarini et al. (2006) stated the students are expected to learn some language features of descriptive text. Descriptive text must use present tense. However, the students were assessing other aspects of grammatical error like the word order and verb agreement. The students should only focus on the grammar that is used in writing descriptive text. It happened because the teacher did not give certain criteria and what kind of grammar that the students should assess.

Furthermore, regarding those problem the students have more difficulties to determine the grammatical error. Most the students gave incorrect assessment to their peer. It happened because the students were more uncomfortable and less confident of their ability to assess fairly and responsibly when it came to assessing the English language proficiency of their peers. The capability of the students to give feedback to their peer was still doubtful. According to Susanto (2015) peer assessment should not be used for assessing the student's performance because the reliability, the validity, the ability of student's evaluation, and the honesty for giving the evaluation are still doubtful. Sometimes, students are fear and reluctant to give low score or bad evaluation to other students because they are friends. Moreover, students also cannot be sure to evaluate other students because they have not had the ability yet.

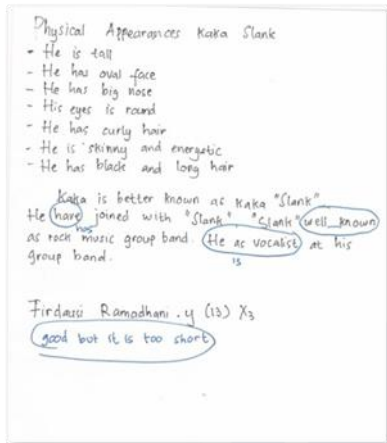
Student's Ability to Correct Vocabulary Errors of Peer's Written Work.

The second problem which was related with the application of student's peer assessment of grammatical errors in writing was the activity of the students when the students acted as assessor in editing stage. Brown (2001) states there are some ways to do peer assessment in language classroom. For example, peer assessment can be done in writing class through revising written work with a peer (peer editing), proofreading, and setting goals for increasing opportunities to write. Hence, in this research the students conducted peer assessment by revising written work, commenting peer's written work, and giving suggestion to other's written work.

PEER ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS OF A WRITING CLASS

First, excellent student (SE) assessed the vocabulary error by giving correction (illustration 1). For example, SE corrected vocabulary error like SLANK well known, it should be SLANK well-known. SE also commented that the text was too short.

(Illustration 1)



SE only focused on correcting misspelled word. SE was mistaken when corrected the sentence SLANK well known, it should be SLANK well-known (illustration 2). The student cannot differentiate the use of hyphen '-' in well known. In this sentence, it was correct that well known is without hyphen '-'. Then we add a hyphen '-' between 'well' and 'known' directly before a noun. SE also has difficulty to give correction to the peer even SE made mistake and judge the peer's sentence was error.

Second, student with average English proficiency (SA) assessed the vocabulary error by giving correction (Illustration 2). For example, he is artis, it should be he is actress.

(Illustration 2)



SA assessed the translation of the word. For example, he is actress; actress is a woman whose job is acting in plays of film. It should be actor because Kaka is a man. Then the word energetic, it should be corrected energetic. The second SE also made mistake when correcting the vocabulary error. It is not much different

with the other student that the student's mastery vocabulary was still limited.

Third, student with poor English proficiency (SP) did not give any correction or comment to the peer's vocabulary error (illustration 6). SP assumed that there was nothing error with the vocabulary.

(Illustration 6)



SP assumed that there was nothing error with the vocabulary. Yet, SP did not recognize some errors like the sentence he has black, long, and curly hair. It should be corrected he has black, curly, and long hair. SP cannot recognize that error because the students have not learned that knowledge yet. It can happen not only because the student's mastery of vocabulary but also the student's low responsibility to assess their peer.

From the analysis above, the researcher concluded that the students still made the same mistake like when the students assessing the grammatical error. The teacher also did not explain what kind of vocabulary error that the student should assess. The students lack types of vocabulary that is used in descriptive text. It happened because the teacher did not explain the language feature of descriptive text. The teacher seems to underestimate the important of giving the whole explanation of descriptive text. The teacher only explained the description, the generic structure, and social function. One of the important parts of descriptive text is language feature that consist of the rule of grammar use and vocabulary use.

In the analysis above, the students only corrected the vocabulary error like misspelled word and the translation of words. Kumalarini et al (2006) states the students are expected to learn vocabulary use in the descriptive text. The students need to learn specific special nouns, detailed noun phrases related to a subject, kinds of adjectives - which have quality in describing, numbering, and classifying -, verbs related to inform the subject, linking and feeling verbs to express the writer's point of view about the subject, action verbs, and adverbial to add the information about action of the subject. However, the students did not have that knowledge because the teacher

did not teach them so the students cannot assess their peer written work properly.

Student's Response towards Peer Assessment in Writing Class.

The researcher chose 12 students to represent the students. These 12 students represented various level of students' English proficiency. They were four students with excellent English proficiency, four students with average English proficiency, and four students with poor English proficiency. By categorizing the students into three proficient levels, the researcher gained more information about students' responses toward the implementation of peer assessment in writing class. The researcher formulated five questions that would be answered by the students. The questions are related with the implementation of peer assessment in the writing class. Here is the question that was made by the researcher.

Apakah kamu suka dengan pelajaran bahasa Inggris? Kenapa? *Do you like English? Why?*

Kesulitan apa saja yang kamu dapatkan ketika menulis? *What difficulties do you find when you write?*

Apakah kamu mengerti tentang peer assessment? *Do you understand about peer assessment?*

Bagaimana pendapatmu tentang pelaksanaan peer assessment di kelas writing? apakah kamu terbantu dengan pelaksanaan peer assessment? kenapa? *What do you think about the implementation of peer assessment in writing class? Does peer assessment help you? Why?*

Apakah kamu punya kesulitan ketika pelaksanaan peer assessment di kelas writing? *Do you get any difficulties when the implementation of peer assessment in writing class?*

Based on the result of interview the researcher concluded that although the students usually conduct peer assessment in their class they still got some difficulties to assess and give feedback to their peer. Their ability of assessing and giving feedback are still doubtful because they are doubt if they assessed it correctly. According to Cheng and Warren (2005) there are two reasons the students are doubtful with their capability in assessing their peer's performance. The first reason lied in the learners' uncertainty as to what constituted proficiency, and the second reason resulted from the learners' belief that their linguistic competence was insufficient for the task.

Furthermore, the students still complained to their friend because sometimes they get incorrect assessment.

Because of that the students do not value the feedback from their peer and even they deny it. This makes the students do not value the result of peer assessment because they do not believe their peer capability to assess their performance and they tend to estimate their peer ability.

However, the implementation of peer assessment still can help them because it makes students more consider about their work. Brown and Hudson (1998) cited in (Brown, 2001) state a number of advantages of peer assessment are the speed, direct involvement of students, the encouragement of autonomy, and increased motivation because of the peer assessment in the process of learning. It means that the teacher can engage peer assessment in the classroom to increase the students' motivation of learning and encourage them to learn better.

Therefore, the teacher should consider the process of peer assessment itself. If the process of assessment was conducting with the teacher guidance perhaps the result of peer assessment was better. Hence, the teacher should facilitate them when doing peer assessment so peer assessment can be done perfectly. The teacher should consider that peer assessment cannot be used as judgment to assess students' performance. So, the teacher should have his own way to assess students' performance. But, the teacher still can assess students' responsibility and students' participation.

Conclusion

Based on the result and discussion in, it can be concluded that the students assessed peer's written work randomly without some criteria of grammar and vocabulary because the teacher did not give explanation about some criteria of grammar and vocabulary that must be assessed by the students to assess peer's written work, and it makes peer assessment doubtfully to be used for measuring student's performance in this class. There are some reasons peer assessment cannot be used as measurement of student's performance in this school.

First, the lack of students' ability to assess their peer work. The biggest problem the students have is the students' ability. The students do not assess their peer work properly because the students lack ability of certain knowledge such as the students' mastery of grammar and the students' mastery of vocabulary are still limited. Second, the students' subjectivity that makes the result of peer assessment is doubtful. The researcher had found the students' subjectivity when assessing the peer's work such as, in some students' work although their peer made some errors in their work the student gave their peer good score. Lastly, the students' responsibility when assessing their peer's work is low. In the previous chapter, the researcher found that there were some students that did not assess their peer's work wisely such as the students did not give their peer correction although they knew that there was an error with their peer's work.

PEER ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS OF A WRITING CLASS

However, the teacher can engage peer assessment in the classroom to get several advantages. The teacher can encourage the students to understand the subject faster, monitor their own learning improvement directly, and increase the students' motivation to learn much better.

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