

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS BY USING
PEER FEEDBACK FOR THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF
THE OFFICE ADMINISTRATION STUDY PROGRAM AT
SMK MUHAMMADIYAH 1 TEMPEL**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to improve the writing skills of the tenth grade students in SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Tempel through the use of peer feedback in the teaching-learning process.

The subjects of the study were 23 students of the Office Administration Class and an English teacher. The study was conducted in two cycles consisting of three meetings in each cycle. The researcher followed the steps in action research including planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The instruments used to gather the data were observation checklists, interview guidelines and writing tasks. The data in this study were obtained from observation, interview and students' writing tasks. The data collected were in the form of field notes, interview transcripts and students' writing scores. The researcher used data analysis technique as suggested by Burns to analyze the qualitative data and descriptive statistics to analyze the quantitative the data.

The results showed that the application of peer feedback in the teaching-learning process could improve the students' writing skills. The qualitative data showed that there were improvement in the aspects of grammar, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. This finding was supported by the quantitative data, where the students' mean score in writing improved. The mean score of the students' writing in the post test was 21.09. It was higher than the students' mean score in the pre-test which was 16.52. The mean value gained from the research process was 4.57. The achievement above proved that the use of peer feedback improved the writing skills of the students in the Office Administration Study Program at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Tempel.

Key words: writing skills, peer feedback

**MENINGKATKAN KETERAMPILAN MENULIS SISWA DENGAN
MENGUNAKAN METODE PEER FEEDBACK UNTUK SISWA KELAS X
PROGRAM ADMINISTRASIPERKANTORAN SMK MUHAMMADIYAH 1
TEMPEL**

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa kelas X di SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Tempel melalui penggunaan peer feedback dalam proses belajar mengajar.

Subjek penelitian adalah 23 siswa kelas Administrasi Perkantoran dan seorang guru Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian dilakukan dalam dua siklus yang terdiri dari tiga pertemuan di setiap siklusnya. Peneliti mengikuti langkah-langkah dalam penelitian tindakan termasuk perencanaan, tindakan, pengamatan dan refleksi. Instrumen yang digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data adalah checklist observasi, pedoman wawancara dan tugas menulis siswa. Data dalam penelitian ini diperoleh dari hasil observasi, wawancara dan penulisan tugas siswa. Data yang dikumpulkan berupa catatan lapangan, transkrip wawancara dan nilai tulisan siswa. Peneliti menggunakan teknik analisis data seperti yang disarankan oleh Burns untuk menganalisis data kualitatif dan deskriptif statistik untuk menganalisis data kuantitatif.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan peer feedback dalam proses belajar mengajar dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa. Data kualitatif menunjukkan bahwa ada perbaikan dalam aspek tata bahasa, organisasi, kosa kata dan mekanika penulisan. Perbaikan juga didukung oleh data kuantitatif, dimana nilai rata-rata tulisan siswa meningkat. Skor rata-rata tulisan siswa dalam post-test adalah 21,09. Skor tersebut lebih tinggi dari nilai rata-rata siswa dalam pre-test yang mencapai 16,52. Peningkatan nilai rata-rata yang diperoleh dari proses penelitian ini adalah 4,57. Peningkatan di atas membuktikan bahwa penggunaan peer feedback meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa kelas X Program Administrasi Perkantoran di SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Tempel.

Kata kunci: kemampuan menulis, peer feedback

INTRODUCTION

English is inevitably vital for all aspects of living in this era, it is one of the must taught subjects in schools, including in Indonesia. Based on the latest curriculum, English becomes a compulsory subject starting from elementary school level. Based on School-Based Curriculum, English teachers are expected to teach the language by considering four main skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing in delivering the contents. The skills are divided into two; they are receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive skills are listening and reading, while productive skills are speaking and writing. Kingston, et al. (2002:3) stated that productive skills can measure the student's achievement, especially the writing performance. In fact, mastering the writing skills is not an easy matter for students. Heaton (1974:135) said that writing skill is more complex and difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only in grammatical devices but also concept and judgment.

To comprehend the teaching of writing at school, the researcher observed a classroom at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Tempel. There were some problems found in the teaching-learning writing. The first problem came from the teacher. In the teaching learning process, she gave the students less practice to write. The students' writings also showed that she gave only few feedbacks in the form of grade and correction on their writings. The learning process could not effectively encourage students to learn writing. The second problem related to the students' writing skills. Based on the observation, the students had limited vocabularies. In the organization of the text, the students seemed confused in rearranging the paragraph because they did not know the pattern. They also rarely constructed grammatically correct sentences in their writings. It indicated that they had difficulty in grammar.

The researcher and the collaborator held a discussion to select a specific technique to solve the problems. They agreed to use

peer feedback as the main technique used in the research. According to Nation (2009:115), feedback is an important way of encouraging students to keep their goals in mind. It is important to provide them with feedback about the effectiveness of their writing so that the students can carry on the idea of their writing. In this activity, the students receive their friends' work and then analyze it and give comment, correction or suggestion on it. After that, they revise the writing based on the feedback from their friends.

There were several reasons why peer feedback was chosen. Rollinson (2005:24) said that peer readers can provide useful feedback to the students since. Besides, Chandler (2003) stated that correction in the students' writing product could decrease grammatical and lexical errors in their next writing (as cited in Hyland and Hyland, 2006:84).

In order to conduct peer feedback in writing class, the researcher looked up to some previous studies that used the same technique. According to Ferris

(2003:165), there are several steps in the implementation of peer feedback, the steps are; utilizing peer feedback consistently, explain the benefits of peer feedback to students, prepare the students carefully for peer response, form pairs or groups thoughtfully, provide structure for peer review sessions, monitor peer review sessions and hold students' responsibilities for taking peer feedback opportunities seriously.

Some studies had been conducted to find the use of peer feedback to improve students' writing ability. One of the studies was conducted by Fatoni in 2013. Based on the result of his study, the implication of peer response improved the students' writing ability and attitude toward the teaching and learning process of writing.

The study described above outlines the effectiveness of peer feedback to help improve the students' writing skills. Thus, peer feedback was used in this research to improve the students' writing skills.

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of the research is Action Research. The research was started on December 14th, 2016 to February 21st, 2017. The place setting was in Office Administration class X at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Tempel. The school is located at Sanggrahan village, Mojorejo, Tempel, Sleman Regency of Yogyakarta. The subjects of the research were 23 students of Office Administration class X and an English teacher.

The researcher used the procedure of action research by Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1998) in Burns (2010:8). The steps are planning, action, observation and reflection. The preliminary study was firstly conducted to identify the problems that occurred on the field. In this step, the researcher observed the teaching-learning activity and interviewed the students and the teacher to find out the problem related to the students' writing skills. After that, the researcher and the observer discussed to develop a plan to overcome the problems found in the preliminary study. They

attempted to design the teaching material and activity which could enhance the students' writing skills. The next step was action and observation. In this step, the researcher implemented the plans that were prepared in the previous step. Besides, this was the step where the researcher observed the classroom activity by the help of collaborator. The researcher and the collaborator conducted a reflection after the action in a cycle was done. This reflection was important to see whether the action had been successful or not. Since the action was successful, the researcher could continue his work.

The data collection techniques used in the research was observation, interview, documentation, and Test. The data collection instruments were observation checklist, interview guidelines and writing tests.

There were three ways that the researcher used to obtain the qualitative data: Interviews, observation and documentation. The interview was held continuously in cycle I and cycle II. It was implemented to compare the

effectiveness of peer feedback in improving the students' writing skills. The documentation was done by media such as digital camera and phone recorder in order to get the real evidence of the situation. Observation was held from the very beginning of the research. To record every detailed event that happened in the research, the researcher used field note as the tool to gather the data.

To get the quantitative data, tests were held before and after the actions. Pre-test was given to find the existing student's ability in writing invitation letter before the action was done. The post test was given at the end of the research to find out whether students improved their writing skills or not. The results of qualitative and quantitative data in progress would show the students' improvement in the writing skills. After the data were collected, the researcher analyzed it with the help of collaborator.

To analyze the qualitative data, the data analysis technique that was used in the research was based on Burn's technique (2010), they are;

assembling the data, coding the data, comparing the data, building interpretation, and reporting the outcome.

To analyze the quantitative data, the researcher used descriptive statistics. According to Bernstein (1999) descriptive statistics are useful for describing the basic features of data. The descriptive statistics were aimed to get the mean of the data. In order to analyze the data, the researcher compared the mean scores of the students' writings from pre-test to post-test. The result shows the students' progression in the writing skills.

For the validity of the research, the researcher used the criteria of validity in action research according to Anderson in Burns (2010), they are; democratic validity, outcome validity, process validity, catalytic validity and dialogic validity.

For the reliability of the research, the researcher used data triangulation. Burns (2010: 97) stated that there are four kinds of triangulation namely time triangulation, space triangulation, investigator triangulation, and

theoretical triangulation. In this research, the researcher only used two of them; investigator triangulation and theoretical triangulation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the beginning, the researcher held a preliminary study to find the problems in the teaching-learning writing. The researcher limited the problems and focused on grammar, spelling, organization and vocabulary. In order to solve the problems, the researcher decided to use peer feedback as the main technique of the research. There were some actions that were carried out in the teaching-learning process for this technique. First, the researcher gave explanation about how to do peer feedback. It was aimed to introduce the technique to the students. He also gave examples of how to do the peer feedback.

The researcher gave the students their drafts to be analyzed by their friends. At first, they looked confused about what they needed to do. Then, the researcher asked them to pay attention to the organization

aspect in the letter. It was aimed to focus the subject matter for the students' to analyze and in giving feedback. The students started to understand the process and began to analyze the writing. After that, the researcher asked the students to give the writings to the owner and make revision based on the feedback that was given by their peers. The purpose of making the revision was to reflect on their writings according to different point of view. In the second cycle, they did the peer feedback again but with some additional aspects to analyze. The process repetition was aimed to make the students familiar with peer feedback. The additional aspect of writing was aimed to improve the students writing skills.

The students could benefit from the activity. For example, it helped the students improve their writing ability. The students' grammatical mistakes in the final draft were less than that in the pre-test. They could avoid making mistakes in the aspect that they already learnt. It shows that the peer feedback helped improving the

students' grammar mastery. They could also learn to collaborate with their friends in criticizing each other's writing and they knew how to use the feedback to make their draft better through the peer feedback activity.

There were additional activities to support the peer feedback technique in the teaching-learning process. The activities were text identification and pre-writing. The researcher proposed text identification activity to solve the students' problem in text organization. Meanwhile, the pre-writing was aimed to enrich and improve the students' vocabulary mastery. Text identification activity was successfully improving the students' background knowledge toward invitation letter. The score of the organization aspect improved from the average score of 3.37 to 4.43. The pre writing activity had helped the students in the drafting process by providing vocabularies related to the field. The improvement in the vocabulary aspect can be seen through the decreasing amount of

misspellings and the more appropriate use of vocabulary items.

Below are the general findings of the students' scores in the five aspects of writing from the pre-test, the cycle 1, the cycle 2, and the post-test.

Table 1. The Students' Mean Scores from pre-test to post-test

Writing Aspect	Pre-test	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Post-test
Scores in total	16.52	18.56	19.48	21.09

The scores in the table were obtained from the accumulation of the students' scores in all those five aspects of writing in the pre-test, the cycle 1, the cycle 2, and the post-test. In the pre-test, the mean of the total score was 16.52. It improved to 18.56 in the cycle 1. In the cycle 2, the mean of the total score was 19.48. It was higher than the cycle 1.

The findings are consistent with Fatoni (2014) who wrote that peer response could improve the students' writing ability. The finding shows that the implementation of peer feedback could improve the students' writing skills and motivation in learning writing.

CONCLUSION

In order to find out whether the teaching strategy was successful or not, the researcher, the collaborator, and the observer held a discussion. The discussion was related to the implementation of the cycle I and cycle II. Based on the discussion, it was concluded that the actions in both cycle made some improvements for the students' writing skills. The students' improvements can be seen in the peer feedback process. The students' grammatical mistakes in the final draft were less than that in the pre-test. They could avoid making mistakes in the aspect that they already learnt. It shows that the peer feedback helped improving the students' grammar mastery. They could also learn to collaborate with their friends in criticizing each other's writing and they knew how to use the feedback to make their draft better through the peer feedback activity. Thus, it could be concluded that the implementation of peer

feedback technique could improve the students' writing skills.

To complete the data, the researcher interviewed some students. From the interviews, the students stated that they felt some improvement in their writing skills. by using peer feedback technique, the students also got more confidence in writing.

It is recommended for English teachers to use peer feedback. It is an interesting writing activity that creates interactive communication for both the teacher and the students. This activity is student-centered which allows the students to learn collaboratively. Besides, peer feedback can motivate the students to learn writing and improve their writing skills. Peer feedback is a suitable technique for the students to learn writing. They should keep practicing to improve their writing skills. For other researchers who are interested in improving the students writing abilities, it is recommended to employ the peer feedback on different grades of education to see the effectiveness of the technique in

improving the students' writing skills.

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