

ASTUDY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PEER-EDITING TECHNIQUE IN ENGLISH WRITING SKIL

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Abstract: Writing is a process of exploring ideas to share the writers' ideas with the readers through written language. One of the difficulties faced by students when they write is no one checking the students' writing. Based on the consideration above, the researcher argues that peer editing might become a teaching technique which can be applied to solve this problem. So, this present study is intended to know the way the lecturer implements the peer editing technique, to identify the problems faced by the students when the peer editing technique is implemented, and to understand the way how the students solve their problems when the peer editing technique is implemented at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

For that purposes, descriptive research was adopted because the researcher assessed the nature of existing conditions. The instruments used were observation field notes and questionnaire checklist.

The result showed that the way the lecturer implements the peer-editing technique in writing class in proper way which was in line with the explanation from Yang et. al (2006). It included pre peer editing stage, while peer editing stage, and post peer editing stage. Dealing with the students' problems when the peer editing technique was implemented in writing class, the researcher concluded the students have difficulties in: understanding the meaning of peer's writing, revising the peer's writing related with grammar, revising the peer's writing related with coherence (ideas in every sentence), and understanding what they should revise in the peer's writing related with organization of writing (introduction, body, and conclusion). Dealing with the way the students solved their problems when the peer-editing technique was implemented in writing class, the researcher summarized that all of the students have the same opinions that when they feel hard to understand about the peers' writing, they will ask to the writer what he or she means in his or her writing. Also, they will ask to the lecturer when they have different opinions with the writers and the correctors.

Keywords: *Writing, Peer-Editing, Technique.*

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Introduction

Writing is a process of exploring ideas to share with the readers through written language. Leki believed that writing is communicating. Good writing helps readers understand your ideas as clearly as possible. The readers, accordingly, cannot understand what the author's mean if the writer cannot provide clear idea in writing.

Based on the researcher's experience, one of the difficulties in writing is no one checking the writing products in detail. It makes the learners can not identify what mistakes they have done. Masyhud , in his research entitled *The Problems Faced by Students in Writing Essay Both Individual Work and in Group Work* found that proofread is one of the difficulties faced by students when they write. In applying peer-editing, the learners have a chance to ask their friends to check their writing products.

Considering that writing is a process not product; and peer-editing is a teaching technique which may improve students' writing achievement, the researcher tries to explore the peer-editing technique implemented at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang. The aim of this study is to examine some problems when the peer-editing technique was implemented in writing class. Moreover, the researcher observes the way the lecturer implements the peer-editing techniques, the problems faced by the students, and how they solve their problems when implementing the peer-editing

technique.

The implementation of peer-editing is proven successfully in the process of writing. Fahriyana (2003), in her investigation entitled *Peer-Editing in the Process of Learning Writing Done by the Fourth-Semester Students at the English Department of Muhammadiyah University* found that the students responded positively toward the peer-editing in their writing class. Those students paid attention and did the works given well. They also participated actively when it was time to do the peer-editing.

Writing

Writing is the use of language for expression and communication. The writer should think the people who will read their writing. Among the four language skills (reading, listening, speaking, and writing), writing is considered as the most difficult one to master. It is because someone has to master other skills including grammar, structure, and vocabulary in order to write something. Oshima and Hogue mention that writing is a process, not a product. The most important thing in writing is the process how a writer produces the writing, not the final product of the writing.

The writing process is a reflection of our natural thinking process. That is why; using the writing process will enable students to express ideas in their own language. Oshima and Hogue identified four main stages in the writing process:

creating (prewriting), planning (outlining), writing the rough draft, and polishing.

In learning writing, the writers need a high concentration, spirit, and much time because writing is a complex process. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are important things which must be concerned while learning writing.

The Process of Editing in Writing

In his article, Shoebottom explained about the process of editing in writing. It includes checking grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Each step is elaborated as follows:

1. Checking Grammar

English grammar covers a huge area, and writers cannot check for everything separately. The best idea is to concentrate first on verbs (tenses and forms). Once the writers have checked the verbs, they should check carefully those aspects of grammar that they personally have most difficulty with.

2. Checking Spelling

When the writers read through their writing, they may stop at words that do not look right. If the writers are writing on a computer, they should run the spell check. This will help the writers to correct most of their mistakes.

3. Checking Punctuation

When the writers are revising their writing, they should check to make sure they have not written any run-on sentences or sentence fragments. In

correcting these problems, the writers usually need to change the punctuation. When editing, the writers check other aspects as well.

4. Checking Capitalization

Check that the writers' sentences all start with a capital letter. The writers also need capital letters for all proper nouns such as names of people, countries, cities, rivers, etc.

The Peer-Editing Technique in The Process of Learning Writing

Peer-editing is similar to the more general terms such as peer review, peer response, peer feedback, peer evaluation, and peer assessment. Hansen and Liu, states that peer-editing refers to the use of learners as sources of information in commenting and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing.

It is in line with *Charoenchang who mentions that peer-editing is usually defined differently by various theorists, but normally it is based on helping or encouraging learners to share a role as evaluators of each other's errors in written work. The researcher takes a conclusion that peer-editing gives them an opportunity to learn from each other by critiquing others' work through the writing contents and ideas in writing activities. It includes correcting writing mechanics and grammar use of the students' writing.*

Steps of Peer Editing

Yang et. al identified three steps of peer editing, namely pre-peer editing stage, while-editing stage, and post-peer-editing stage. Each step is identified as follows:

1. Pre-Peer Editing Stage

This includes clarifying objectives and creating awareness about peer-editing. Teachers should pay attention in doing some activities involving explaining, giving examples, demonstrating, and especially modeling on how to do peer-editing. In doing this stage, the students know the roles as editors and writers from practicing and discussing them with each other. The students should be guided on steps of peer-editing. This comes from clear, simple, and step-by-step instructions from the teachers on what and how to do peer editing, involved skills about how to work in groups or pairs.

2. While Peer Editing Stage

Teacher and students' roles in this stage are very important. For a teacher, he or she should adjust the role as a supporter and language resource while monitoring group work. For students, they should participate groups such as asking, explaining, exchanging ideas, and consulting to fulfill the task.

3. Post-Peer Editing Stage

Some problematical points may not be solved during the peer editing stage. There might be the case that the editors

have some questions about the meaning of some words or sentences, ask for clarification and explanation. Because of that, post peer editing stage is needed. After peer editing, a conference between students and teacher should help improve the quality of students' feedback, which will make peer editing more useful to all students. (Adopted from Yang et. al, 2006. p.179).

Benefits of Peer Editing

Charoenchang in her article "Benefits and Some Practical Aspects of Peer-Editing in Teaching Writing" describes some benefits of peer editing, those are:

1. *Independent Writing: Strategy Training*

For academic writing, students mainly gain practice on language points including grammar, structure related to the type of writing and organizing ideas for paragraph and essay writing. Limited time causes less time for training students to be used to writing as a process. Repeated practice will make peer editing familiar to them. This awareness to improve one's own writing will be like training learning strategies, making them more self-directed in their own writing.

2. *Cooperative and Collaborative Learning*

Cooperative learning is a particular set of classroom techniques that foster

learners' interdependence as a route to cognitive and social development. Characteristics of cooperative learning are positive interdependence, accountability, group formation and cognitive and social development. This concept should be applied with the teaching of writing in such a way that learners work in a team to fulfill a goal of correcting errors in writing for each other. Peer editing also brings classroom interaction as learners ask, explain and give comment to each other. It enhances their learning because both writers and editors focus on meaning as well as form of language.

3. *Learning To Write Through Mutual Scaffolding*

The benefit gained from peer editing is that learners adjust themselves to others in the same group/pair. They practice communicative skills like asking for clarification and explaining problematic points to each other. These also result in knowing more about peers' knowledge and interest. Besides, consulting each other to complete the task of editing peers' written work leads to a sense of being united together, thus creating more relationship. This will create a less threatening classroom atmosphere as their errors will be treated as committed by a team, not an individual. (Adopted from Charoenchang, 2012. p.2).

From the explanation above, peer editing can help or encourage the students to share a role as evaluators of each other's errors in written work. It is important because learners can cooperatively work and support each other through this activity. More interactions and personal relationship will be derived through negotiation of forms. Also, the fact that poor learners are supported in learning by good learners leads to learning as well as strengthening one's knowledge about language.

Research Method

The researcher applied the descriptive research design because it assessed the nature of existing conditions. The current phenomenon that the researcher intended to explain was the way the lecturer implements the peer-editing technique, the problems faced by the students when the peer editing technique is implemented, and the way how the students solve their problems when the peer-editing technique is implemented at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

There were eleven (11) writing classes, namely Class A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, and L. The total number of the target population was approximately 285 students. Furthermore, the sample in this present study was taken using purposive sampling procedure. The sample in this present study consisted of 24 students from H class.

In this present study, non-participant observation was used because the researcher

did not actively participate in the situation. She just sat in the back of the class when the students were learning, and she just took notes the activities being done by the lecturer and students during teaching learning activities. The purpose of non-participant observation was to know the way the lecturer implemented the peer editing technique in writing class. It was done because the lecturer had already implemented peer editing technique in writing class, so that the researcher only took notes of all activities during teaching learning activities. In this present study, the researcher also used a checklist.

The questionnaire checklist contained of the questions and alternative answers for the respondents. The questionnaire checklist was written in Indonesian language to avoid respondents' misunderstanding. It was distributed to the sixth-semester students of H class who had learned peer-editing in writing class.

Research Findings

To obtain the data related to the way the lecturer implemented the peer-editing technique in the writing class, the researcher conducted an observation. The result of observation field notes can be clarified in the following description.

1) The lecturer explained the material to the students.

Before applying the peer-editing technique, the lecturer explained the material about an article. The students

had to write an article about teaching English skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). In this case, the lecturer encouraged students to make a list of all the topics. This might help students decide which topic was appropriate, and also generated more information.

The lecturer explained that peer-editing was an activity that the students had to correct the peers' writing including grammar, content, punctuation, capitalization, etc. The lecturer gave encouragement that peer-editing technique was not just a course requirement, but it was an essential part of the writing process that all successful writers had to do.

Moreover, the lecturer also reminded the students that the process of producing academic and professional writing generally involved three steps: *drafting, revising, and editing*. The peer-editing technique often became the most helpful technique to students. The purpose of the peer-editing technique was to help the writers determine which parts of the paper were effective, and which were unclear, incomplete, or unconvincing.

2) Lecturer explained to the students the roles they had to play both as editors and writers.

In this stage, the students become editors and writers. All the students had

the opportunity to work with their peers through the writing products. As the editors, their job was to comment and revised the writers' writing product including grammar, content, capitalization, punctuation, etc. As the writers, they had to pay more attention to their mistakes which had been revised by the editors. The writers had to revised their writing based on the editors' comments.

3) The lecturer asked the students to choose their peer and exchanged their papers.

In doing peer-editing, two students work together on their papers. The peer was a friend from the writers who sat beside them. After settling down the peers, the lecturer asked the students to exchange their papers. Then, they had to work as the editors. They had to revised all the mistakes done by the writers by underlining and revising it words by words. This activity gave the writers clear understanding about their mistakes.

4) The lecturer asked the students to put their own name on the papers they edited.

The purpose of this step was to give the students the sense of appreciation and support their self-esteem. It enhanced their confidence and made them have a responsibility with the task they were

assigned. Furthermore, it enabled students to discuss any arguments that they may disagree with.

5) The lecturer asks the students to get their papers back.

In this stage, the correctors had to give the writers' papers back which makes the writers understand their mistakes.

6) The lecturer reminded the students to negotiate their mistakes with the corrector.

The purpose of this activity was because it was not guaranteed that all the peer's suggestions are correct. In some cases, the writer was correct and the editor made a mistake. Therefore, the writers had to discuss their viewpoints with the editor.

7) The lecturer made a conference between students and him.

After peer editing, the lecturer made a conference between students and him to improve the quality of students' feedback. The lecturer explained about the students' mistakes in writing, and what they had to do to improve it. It was more beneficial for the students if the lecturer comment were not given on the same draft with the peers' comments. The students might pay more attention to the lecturer's comment if he worked in the same draft with the peers' comments.

Students' problems when the peer editing technique was implemented in writing class.

To know the students' problem in peer-editing technique, the researcher used questionnaire checklist. It can be inferred that all of the students understood how to write well, including its steps. All participants in this present study said that they always read the peers' writing more than once when they did peer editing.

On the other hand, 14 (58, 33%) out of 24 students had problems in understanding the writing. Then, 10 students (41, 66%) answered "Disagree" and 8 students (33,33%) answered "Strongly Disagree" that they understood about what they had to revised in the peer's writing related with grammar (misspelled words, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, transition, and conjunction). It means that 18 students (75%) out of 24 students had difficulty in revising the peers' writing related with grammar. Next, 12 students (50%) answered "Disagree" and 4 students (16.66%) answered "Strongly Disagree" that they understood that they had to revised related with coherence (ideas in every sentence). It means that 16 students (66.66%) stated that they had a problem in revising the peer's writing related with coherence (ideas in every sentence). The last, 5 students (20.83%) out of 24 understood what they had to revised in the

peer's writing related with organization of writing (introduction, body, and conclusion).

The Way the Students Solved Their Problems when the Peer Editing Technique Was Implemented in Writing Class.

Based on the result of the questionnaire, it can be summarized that all of the students had the same opinions that when they did not understand about the peers' writing, they asked the writer what he or she meant in his or her writing. Also, they would ask their lecturer if they had different opinion with the correctors.

Based on the research finding, it can be stated that the implementation of peer editing technique in writing class was in line with the explanation from Yang et. al (2006). The lecturer did some steps including pre-peer editing stage (the lecturer explains the material, the concept of peer-editing, and the students' role); while peer editing stage (the lecturer asks the students to choose their peer, exchange their papers, and to put the editor's name), and post-editing stage (the lecturer asks the students to get their papers back, to negotiate their mistakes with the editor, and consult with the teacher). In conclusion, if peer-editing technique properly implemented, it can generate a rich source of information for content and rhetorical issues, and give the students a sense of group cohesion.

Each question in the questionnaire checklist represented someone's opinions, states, situations, feelings, and certain perception. The researcher conducted the questionnaire checklist based on the problems from the researcher's and some of her friends' experience when the peer editing technique was implemented in daily class activities. Based on the checklist, 14 (58,33%) out of 24 students have problem in understanding the meaning of peer's writing, 18 students (75%) out of 24 students have difficulty in revising related with grammar, 16 students (66,66%) have a problem related with coherence (ideas in every sentence), and 5 students (20,83%) out of 24 students have a problem in understanding what they should revise in the peer's writing related with organization of writing (introduction, body, and conclusion).

About the way the students solved problems in peer editing technique, the researcher summarized that all of the students (100%) stated that when they did not understand about the peers' writing, they would ask the writer what he or she means in his or her writing. Furthermore, 100% students said that they would ask lecturer when the writers and the correctors have different opinions.

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