

THE IMPACT OF PEER CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK TOWARD DESCRIPTIVE WRITING QUALITY OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

THESIS

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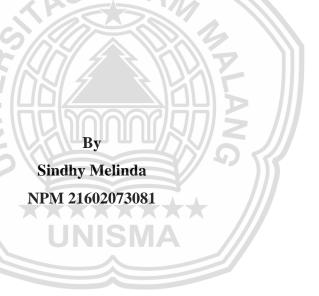
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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

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This study is aimed at finding out whether there is a significant difference of the writing descriptive paragraph between the eighth grade students of SMP Nasional Malang who were taught by using peer corrective feedback and those who were taught by teacher corrective feedback.

This study was classified as a quasi-experimental study adopted from Hatch and Farhady (1981). It involved 50 students which was divided into two groups, VIIIC class 25 students was as experimental group and VIIID class 25 students was as control group. The experimental group was taught by using peer corrective feedback whereas the control group was taught by using teacher corrective feedback. The correction was based on five categories of analytic scorings such as content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The data were collected by means of paragraph writing test. Findings showed that teacher feedback correction by circling errors and describing the type of error with correction codes was better than peer correction for producing accurate revisions.

The data were obtained by using two essay writing tests: pretest and post-test. The pretest was given to both groups before the treatment and the post-test was given after the treatment. The data of the pretest and post-test of both groups were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. After the data were tested and found to be homogeneous and normal, the hypothesis was tested by using Independent-Samples of t-test.

The result of the t-test of the comparative mean score between the pretest and post-test was 0.00% while the t-test of comparative mean score between the use of peer and teacher feedback was 20.1%. It indicates that the use of teacher corrective feedback can improve the students' paragraph writing. However, students apparently felt that they learnt more from peer feedback rather than teacher feedback since they were involved in taking part for the correction directly, and it could lessen the time-consuming job for the teacher on the first and the final draft.

Keywords: Peer Corrective Feedback, Descriptive Paragraph, Writing Quality.



ABSTRAK

Melinda, Sindhy. 2020. *The Impact of Peer Corrective Feedback toward Descriptive Writing Quality of Junior High School Students*. Tesis, Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Islam Malang. Pembimbing: Dr. Alfan Zuhairi, M.Pd.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui perbedaan yang signifikan dari penulisan paragraf deskriptif antara siswa kelas delapan SMP Nasional Malang yang diajar dengan menggunakan umpan balik korektif rekan dan mereka yang diajar oleh umpan balik korektif guru.

Penelitian ini dikelompokkan sebagai penelitian kuasi-eksperimental yang diadopsi dari Hatch dan Farhady (1981). Dalam penelitian ini melibatkan 50 siswa yang dibagi menjadi dua kelompok, yaitu siswa kelas VIIIC 25 anak sebagai kelompok eksperimen dan siswa kelas VIIID 25 anak sebagai kelompok kontrol. Kelompok eksperimen diajarkan dengan menggunakan umpan balik korektif teman sebaya sedangkan kelompok kontrol diajarkan dengan menggunakan umpan balik korektif guru.

Koreksi didasarkan pada lima kategori penilaian analitik seperti konten, organisasi, kosa kata, tata bahasa, dan mekanika. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes menulis paragraf. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa koreksi umpan balik guru dengan melingkari kesalahan dan menjelaskan jenis kesalahan dengan kode koreksi lebih baik daripada koreksi rekan untuk menghasilkan revisi yang akurat.

Data diperoleh dengan menggunakan dua tes menulis esai: *pretest* dan *posttest*. *Pretest* diberikan kepada kedua kelompok sebelum perlakuan dan *posttest* diberikan setelah perlakuan. Data pretest dan *posttest* kedua kelompok dianalisis dengan menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan inferensial. Setelah data diuji dan ditemukan homogen dan normal, hipotesis diuji dengan menggunakan sample bebas dari uji-t.

Hasil uji-t dari skor rata-rata komparatif antara *pretest* dan *posttest* adalah 0,00% sedangkan uji-t skor rata-rata komparatif antara penggunaan umpan balik teman sebaya dan guru adalah 20,1%. Ini menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan umpan balik korektif guru dapat meningkatkan penulisan paragraf siswa. Namun, siswa tampaknya merasa bahwa mereka belajar lebih banyak dari umpan balik teman daripada umpan balik guru karena mereka terlibat dalam mengambil bagian untuk koreksi secara langsung, dan itu bisa mengurangi pekerjaan yang menyita waktu bagi guru pada draf pertama dan terakhir.

Kata Kunci: *Umpan Balik Korektif, Paragraf Deskriptsi, Kualitas Penulisan.*



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general information about the background of the study, the problem of the study, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

There are four important elements in language competence: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Both in the first and second language, all of those elements require accuracy to achieve the effectiveness and need a long effort in educating them. According to Brown (2004), almost every aspect of everyday life for common people is completed orally. In teaching and learning activity of speaking in which a speaker has many possible expressions that can be used to emphasize what he/she intends to when the interlocutor does not catch the messages, the speaker can use intonation and stress in some parts of utterances to make the meaning clearer. Moreover, it is possible for the speaker to make a movement of the hands, arms, or head, in order to convey an idea or feeling and the listeners can get it even though the speaker does not really master the language (Harmer, 1983). However, things are not that easy like speaking when we move to the higher level of English skill namely writing. Writing activity has the same purpose as speaking that is to communicate and express any idea to others. What makes it different is that in communicating through writing, we do not need gestures and intonation as everything is expressed through words or sentences.



Today, the ability of writing becomes important and has a prominent role in the global literate community (Brown, 2004). At least at the basic levels, writing skill becomes one of the conditions that is necessary to get a job. That is why learning English as a second language is important to learn during secondary level. All the important elements in language competence are required in this subject and one that will be discussed in this study is the writing ability.

In teaching and learning EFL particularly in writing activity, teachers play a big role in monitoring the students' work. In writing, making such errors is a kind of common thing done by students. That is why a teacher is needed here to give correction towards the sudent's errors. One of the most important tasks for English teachers is providing written feedback in students' written work (Hyland, 1998; Hyland & Hyland, 2001). However, there have been two competing beliefs about the effectiveness of corrective feedback in enhancing students' writing ability (Ganji, 2009). The first group has claimed that corrective feedback has no use in writing classes. Meanwhile, the other group believes that feedback is a necessary part of writing activity and it indeed improves the students' writing ability. From the first group, Truscott (1996), who focuses on grammar correction, stated that there is no use of corrective feedback in writing courses, even if it can, it had to be banished. Supported by other studies (Semke, 1984; Zame, 1985) cited in Ganji (2009), the results show that there was no convincing proof on studies that error correction could ever help to improve students' writing accuracy.



On the contrary, the opposing group against the first group believes that giving feedback is an important element in writing courses and it is stated by Ferris (1999). He pointed that Truscott's conclusion seemed immediate considering that the results were not yet known. According to him, effective error correction could help some students and the teacher should continue providing feedback regarding the students' belief that it is something valuable. In response to Ferris's (1999) argument about the importance of giving feedback, Truscott (1999) started to pay attention on the technique and approach to error correction that seem to lead to a short-term improvement and long-term improvement. He also investigated whether students had good progress in recognizing particular types of errors in their writing tasks.

Finally, Truscott changed his perception about the effectiveness of feedback. He began to admit that feedback has positive role in enhancing students' writing ability. In most classes, the teacher has a big role in providing correct form for the students. Furthermore, there is no doubt that all students would rather be corrected by their teachers inasmuch as the teacher is considered as the expert who masters the knowledge and as the source of information. Even so, there was another argument against corrective feedback.

Walz (1982), cited in Ganji (2009), stated that giving the students the right answers directly does not last longer or it is only for short term memory because the students are not directly involved in the process of finding the errors and correcting their writings. Therefore, the correction can be done individually, in pairs, or in groups, depending on the number of students and the time provided.



These days, self-correction and peer-correction are the methods used in a course which means that the learners are the active participants in correcting errors made by either themselves or their peers. Meanwhile, the teacher can be the guide that monitors the activity of language learning. Because of the students' involvement in the process of correcting errors actively, what they have learnt will eventually last long on their memory (Ganji, 2009).

Some observations have been done and it is noticed that students often find it difficult to recognize their own making errors but are more able to identify errors in sentences written by their friends (Bartlett, 1982). It is because when a student reads his/her own writing, he does not position himself as a reader who has no knowledge but as the author of the text or as the informant. The student tends to be sure that his composition does not have many errors. Because of correcting students' errors is one of the main duties of a language teacher and it is a time-consuming duty, the teacher remains has responsibility in correcting students' errors (Hajimohammadi, 2011). By applying peer correction in a course, where students are actively involved in the process of correcting errors, the time consuming duty of teacher and the most responsive part of teacher's task will not that hard. Radecki and Swales (1988), noted that the students stated a preference for their instructors to edit grammatical and other mechanical errors as they found these comments to be the most helpful. From this research showed that the writing difficulties of the students are caused by mistakes in the process of teaching and writing in the English class.



Harmer (2004) states that in the long span of time writing has been seen only as a support system for learning grammar and vocabulary rather than as a skill in itself. It shows that teaching writing is only emphasizing the theory of grammar and vocabulary instead of giving the students the opportunity to write as much as possible. Students also have to be concerned with the contents of the writing, not only how to write it.

As previously described, providing feedback and correcting errors on learners' performance are important aspects of teaching writing. The errors made by the students are repeatedly corrected and given feedback since the focus of the course is on accuracy. It has exactly been a usual practice for trainers to correct learners whenever they find errors. Errors are now viewed as reflections of a learners' step of inter language development (Akhter, 2007). It also indicates the natural progress of learning the second language. The presence of errors can be used to let learners know how well they have performed and thus it can motivate them to build a supportive classroom atmosphere. Nevertheless, as a teacher who has a duty in correcting students' performance, a teacher should also be aware that there are bad effects of over-correcting students. For example, students may lose motivation, and they may be reluctant to revise their work as they feel that it is enough for them to know the correct answer from their teacher. Most students indeed like to have some of their errors corrected because it gives them important facts for improvement. Therefore, a lot of research has been conducted in this field, which has produced the result in some pros and cons among teachers and educators regarding how to correct errors.



To re-examine this belief, the writer tried to conduct an experimental research considering the different rates of writing progress using one of the correction methods previously mentioned, namely peer-correction. To correct the students' writing tasks was exactly a significant part of writing process. In some practical issues, peer-correction is applied as the other way to alter the teacher-correction method and it will be appropriate to give opportunity to the students to be involved actively and directly in their own learning.

In addition to examining how students respond to it, writer wants to know the extent to which English teachers are satisfied with their students' responses to their comments. The author chose this topic because for some reason. First, writer wants the results of this study to draw some useful implications that allow other English teachers, to give clear feedback to their students who help them improve their writing and can raise teachers' awareness of their own practices while commenting on their students' papers.

The second reason is based on the writer's experience when asking the students to create English stories that there are some students who have difficulty in building good sentences in paragraph form. In the writing process, there are some difficulties faced by the students. Furthermore, they will make such mistakes not only in vocabulary and spelling but also in grammar. Authors typically find that authors who receive peer-written feedback and teacher written feedback on their errors show improvement, which in some cases is statistically significant.



The focus of this study is the effects of the feedback given by the teacher and the feedback given by peers to the students' writing quality. In the previous research conducted on university students, while in this study conducted on junior high school students who still have simple thinking reasoning. This study wants to show whether the use of feedback can improve junior high school students' skill criteria such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communicative. This study is conducted to determine whether there is an influence in the technique of giving feedback given by teachers and peers to improve the ability in writing a descriptive paragraph of junior high school students.

Thus, this study considers there is a gap in the existing literature that needs to be filled that is whether the use of teacher feedback methods and peer-feedback can be applied in English writing learning at junior high levels. Based on the writer's observation, students at eight grades are difficult to do self-correction on their own written assignment. They never get feedback on their writing work when they make mistakes in their essay. That is why they need a good written corrective feedback to help them revise their error writing. The writer believes that students have different motivation after receiving the corrective feedback.

Peer and teacher feedback can complement each other when students respond to peer work as an unfinished product in a different process than the teacher who normally assesses it as a finished product. Thus, rather than just relying on teacher feedback, combining peer feedback and teacher feedback systematically can provide additional benefits such as making students more



confident in their ability to make decisions about their own writing choices and revisions, reduce writing anxiety, and increase writing skills

Through this study, the writer carried out a study comparing the effectiveness of peer feedback and teacher feedback on junior high school students with a low proficiency level with the aim of finding out if corrective feedback is more effective for improving grammar accuracy when it comes to the teacher or from peer students. This study will also compare the results of the quality of writing descriptive between those given teacher feedback and peer feedback.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the background before, the writer formulates the study question as follows:

- 1. To what extent do the students who are taught by peer corrective feedback achieve better writing performance than those taught by teacher corrective feedback of junior high school?
- 2. What aspect of writing that improves the most after the implementation of peers and teacher feedback in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In line with the study questions above, the writer states the objectives of the study as follows:



- To find out whether students who are taught by peer corrective feedback achieve better writing performance than those taught by teacher corrective feedback of junior high school.
- 2. To find out the aspect of writing that improves the most after the implementation of peers and teacher feedback.

1.4 Hypothesis of the Study

Based on the topic of the research, the following hypothesis is formulated, "There is significant effect between students who are taught by peer corrective feedback achieve better writing performance than those taught by teacher corrective feedback of junior high school".

1.5 Assumption of the Study

This study has the following assumptions: first, teacher and peer corrective feedback are effective methods to change the writing quality of the students. Second, students' scores in writing paragraphs will improve better by using teacher and peer written feedback.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings from this study are expected to be significantly relevant in terms of theoretical and practical aspects. The result of this research is expected to complete the previous findings and support the previous theories about different methods of giving corrective feedback on the writing performance of junior high school students.



Theoretically, for further researcher in the writing area, especially in writing a descriptive paragraph in junior high school is to fulfill some aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, and content. It can prove the finding of the previous studies that the corrective feedback on writing can be implemented and also gives the advantages. The used teacher and peer corrective feedback improve the writing quality of junior high school students.

Practically, the finding of this research can be made as input for English teachers for junior high school to understand more about the students' needs and problems especially related to what concepts that they do not really understand so that the teaching instruction can be done more effectively. When the teacher knowing the students' writing ability, the teacher will be easy to select and design the appropriate teaching method and technique. Besides, by writing ability, it could be expected that some valuable findings could be implemented in the process of students' writing ability in order to be better than before.

Besides, this study can be helpful for junior high school students to encourage their writing ability by using corrective feedback. They not only can improve their writing of descriptive paragraphs but also can write other types of the paragraph such as narrative, recount, procedure, and report. In this study, the descriptive paragraph is made by the students themselves to describe based on the theme (describing people, describing animal, or describing tourism object).



1.7 Scope of the Study

The variables in this study, writing quality as the dependent variable, teacher corrective feedback as an active independent variable, and peer corrective feedback as an attribute independent variable.

The objects of this research were the students of VIIIC and VIIID graders that would be examined their writing ability. They were then divided into two groups to get different treatment of the correction method (peer-correction and teacher correction). Peer correction was the experimental group and teacher correction was the control group. Peer correction means the students are given opportunity to take part in correcting their friends' works. They have to identify errors that have been indicated by the teacher and after that, the teacher should give a chance for students to make correction. Furthermore, teacher correction means the teacher corrects all the students' work herself. This method is used when students are not able to correct themselves and are still lack in grammatical knowledge.

This study focuses on how different treatment of giving feedback improve students' paragraph writing ability. In order to give marks on students' papers, the writer who in this research is the teacher used Chandler (2003)'s codes in giving feedback.

Students must write the paragraph consist of 100 - 200 words that are divided into 2 paragraphs. The students choose one topic to describe, and then they are given 40 minutes to write their paragraphs. The writer only takes two



topics in this writing section of descriptive that is about "My Idol and My Favorite Animal".

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid a kind of misunderstanding and misinterpretation, the key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

Teacher-corrective feedback is the feedback given by the teacher to the students' writing tasks. It will help the students to know their errors and the teacher can identify the students' difficulties by knowing the students' errors.

Absolutely, when the students make an error and then the teacher will correct it by circling the error words and giving comments with a red pen. Teacher corrective feedback can make the students understand their mistake and it will help the student increase the students' ability in writing.

Peer-corrective feedback is a practice where feedback is given by one student to another. Peer feedback provides students opportunities to learn from each other. After students finish their writing assignment of the descriptive paragraph but before the assignment is handed into the teacher for a score, the students have to work together to check each other's work and give comments to the peer partner. Comments from friends are called peer feedback. Peer feedback can be in the form of corrections, opinions, suggestions, or ideas to each other. Ideally, peer feedback is a two-way process in which one cooperates with the other.

Writing is one of the competencies that must be mastered by junior high school students, especially for eighth-graders students. Writing ability that is



taught in accordance with the syllabus is to write a paragraph of description. Students are expected to be able to write and explain something according to the topic into a paragraph. The topic in the chapter of description text taught for eighth-graders is about describing people and animal. The writing must be fulfilled some aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, and the content of the paragraph.

Descriptive focuses on the characteristic features of people, animals, or particular things. It often uses neutral and objective language. The present tense is mostly used in descriptive. The structure in writing descriptively is divided into two parts; identification and description. Descriptive is one of the texts which taught in writing for English subject in junior high school. The theme that is taken is about describing people. This descriptive paragraph must be made by the students to explain about a person they know such as famous people. The paragraph must be made in three paragraphs containing 100 - 200 words.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presents the conclusions and the main suggestions. The conclusions refer to the analysis of the results of pretest and post-test and the results of the test before and after the treatment. The suggestions deal with some recommendation addressed to teachers and students in teaching and learning process of paragraph writing or essay writing.

6.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion presented in the previous chapter, this study resulted in some conclusions. First, the mean score of pretest of the experimental group (67.04) was higher than the control group (66.60) but not significant. It means that both groups were at the same level of paragraph writing ability. Surprisingly, the results of the post-test showed that the mean score of the control group (81.28) was higher than the mean score of the experimental group (79.72). It means that both peer-correction and teacher correction method made the students' ability in paragraph writing improved significantly.

Secondly, equipping and explaining students the list of writing components and the list of correction codes in teaching and learning process could enhance students' paragraph writing ability. This could be seen in the result of the post-test before and after the treatment.

Teachers should look for more opportunities to implement peer feedback activities in their writing classes and peers should be trained more before the peer review sessions. Being an experimental study, this study has limitations such as



the number of participants, a lack of a post-test and semi-structured interview with students. Further research might elaborate on these topics. Also, student papers are analyzed for surface level errors. Further research can investigate meaning level changes.

From the explanation before, it can be concluded that teacher feedback can be more effective than peer feedback in terms of improvement in written grammar when students are given the freedom to decide what kind of feedback they would like. On the other hand, if feedback had been given using a predetermined feedback form, different results may have been found. The practice of students choosing the focus of the feedback they receive has been recommended in the literature (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010b; Ferris, 2002; 2003; Hyland, 1996; Storch, 2010), and different versions of this practice have been described in the literature (e.g. Sommers, 1988 and Storch & Tapper, 1997) it has received far less attention than the traditional 'one-sizefits-all' approach to teacher feedback. Nevertheless, limiting the feedback to a binary answer and related commentary, as done in this study, may be reduced the amount of meaningful feedback given by some students. Therefore, comparing this practice with feedback given based on a predetermined feedback form would be a worthwhile avenue for further study. One could investigate how successful the students were at selecting appropriate questions, how useful the resulting feedback was for revision or whether the students differed significantly in performance after receiving the two types of feedback.



Participants in the peer feedback group had the chance to work together and exchange information orally in their L1 which might have contributed to more successful revisions. As for the ignored feedback, it can be assumed that peers may simply refuse the feedback given by their peers. The higher incorporation of teacher feedback might stem from the fact that students in EFL environments tend to rely on their teachers for surface level errors. They have the feeling that nobody or nothing can know better than their teachers. This might also have deep cultural background in the educational culture that Indonesian students have been thorough.

In addition, it was discovered that both peer and teacher corrections were significantly improving the students' paragraph writing ability and reducing long-term errors. Teacher correction was better for producing accurate revisions and students considered it the fast and easy way for them. However, based on the students' interview about advantages and disadvantages in both methods, students feel that they learn more from peer correction and it took less time for the teacher on the first draft.

6.2 Suggestion

This study demonstrated that the method of teacher correction was a kind of waste of time and energy for the teacher. Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the writer would like to offer some suggestions. First, it is suggested that teachers employ the most effective method in their writing courses especially in order to improve students' writing proficiency and to make the students more active. Furthermore, by applying peer correction students could be trained to



produce accurate revision because students in peer-correction group could eventually be aware in not only form but also meaning. Therefore, it encouraged them to produce meaningful text.

The next suggestion is that it is much hope that this study does not end here but can be a beginning of future studies in the same study community.

Moreover, to understand the type of feedback better, the teachers should examine more carefully their correction practice. Students will eventually be able to recognize a certain criterion of errors by correcting their writing task that has been given mark by the teacher. Then, it reduces the number of errors in the written task that are often done repeatedly after examining and correcting them for several times. Next, students will be motivated to develop oral fluency practice during the discussion in pairs or in groups about the correction of errors in the written task.

Last but not least, it helps to wean students from being dependency to be always corrected by their teacher.

For further research, the researcher can explore deeper on how teacher and students' grammatical knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and motivation toward feedback. Finally, more research needs to be conducted to add teachers' understanding about what is going on during peer correction activity and what strategies that the teacher and the students use.



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