

Applying Peer Feedback To Enhance High School EFL Students' Writing Skills In State High School 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung

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Abstract: Writing is the most challenging skill in English language learning. Researchers at SMKN 1 Rejotangan observed that most students struggled with writing in English. To address this, they implemented the peer feedback method to enhance students' writing skills. The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of peer feedback in improving students' writing abilities. Using a convergent mixed-method design, the research involved 31 students from class XI AKC 2. Instruments included pre-tests, post-tests for quantitative data, and interviews for qualitative data. Quantitative analysis was conducted using a t-test with SPSS 27, and qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Results showed significant improvement in students' writing skills after using peer feedback, as indicated by a significance value of $0.00 < 0.05$. Interviews with five selected participants also revealed positive responses. Hence, the peer feedback method positively impacted the writing abilities of class XI AKC 2 students at SMKN 1 Rejotangan.

Keywords: Peer Feedback, Writing Ability, EFL

1. INTRODUCTION

English is a crucial foreign language for young learners, as it is the most widely used international language (Crystal, 2003). The rapid demand for English proficiency highlights its importance in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) education (Daar, 2020). Effective English learning enhances not just linguistic skills but also listening, speaking, reading, and writing competencies (Ali et al., 2022). Writing, in particular, is considered the most complex skill due to its integration of vocabulary, grammar, and structure, requiring significant intellectual effort (Rohmah, 2024; Zahira et al., 2021).

Effective writing instruction depends on the teacher's ability to develop appropriate materials and strategies tailored to student needs (Mubarok, 2012). Feedback, especially peer feedback, is essential in this process, helping students refine their writing through revisions (D. Ferris & Hedgcock, 2001; F. Hyland & Hyland, 2001). Peer feedback facilitates critical thinking and collaborative learning, promoting better writing skills (Haines, 2021; Kurniawati, 2020).

Studies show that peer feedback significantly enhances writing skills, encouraging students to engage more deeply with the writing process and their peers' feedback (Almutairi, 2023; Gonzalez-Torres & Sarango, 2023; Prompan & Piamsai, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). Despite challenges, such as understanding peers' ideas and providing thorough feedback due to limited grammar knowledge (Hanifah, 2018; Herwiana, 2021), the collaborative nature of peer feedback is beneficial.

At SMKN 1 Rejotangan, students, particularly in class XI AKC 2, faced significant challenges in writing due to a lack of practice and vocabulary (Hermawan et al., 2020). Implementing peer feedback aims to address these issues by fostering a more interactive and supportive learning environment, allowing students to improve their writing skills through mutual assistance and constructive critique (D. Ferris & Hedgcock, 2001; Wijaya, 2022). This study explores the impact of peer feedback on enhancing the writing abilities of EFL high school students at SMKN 1 Rejotangan, drawing on established theories and previous research (F. Hyland & Hyland, 2001; Lee, 2009; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Mubarok, 2012).

Based on the background, this research is titled "Applying Peer Feedback To Enhance High School EFL Students' Writing Skills in State High School 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung." The research addresses three key problems: 1) the significant impact of peer feedback on EFL high school students' writing ability, 2) the implementation process of peer feedback to enhance these students' writing skills, and 3) students' perceptions of the peer feedback method in improving their writing.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Writing Ability

Writing is an essential skill for language learners, crucial for both academic success and future employment (Hornby, 2006). It serves as a medium for expressing ideas, opinions, and emotions, enabling communication through written text (Permata Sari Pranoto, 2013; Tarigan, 2008). Writing is a process that involves pre-writing, organizing thoughts, drafting, and revising (Oshima & Hogue, 2006). It is not an innate talent but a skill that can be taught and refined. Written language has distinct characteristics such as permanence, production time, distance, orthography, complexity, vocabulary, and formality (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

Effective writing includes a clear central idea, logical organization, supporting material, appropriate word choice, and correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation (Wilbers & Sullivan, 2016). Writing also serves multiple purposes: it is a means of communication, a tool for problem-solving and critical thinking, a way to process and filter perceptions, and a method for self-actualization and managing personal environments (Hughey & Jane, 1983). Despite its complexity, writing must be taught deliberately, as it does not come as naturally as spoken language (Harmer, 2001). Writing helps individuals understand and develop themselves, realize their potential, and achieve their goals.

Peer Feedback

According to (Nation, 2001) providing feedback is crucial in helping students stay focused on their writing objectives and improve their writing skills. Feedback is seen as vital for promoting learning and assisting students in refining their writing abilities. Penny (1996) defines feedback as information given to learners about their performance to help them improve. It helps students understand what is expected of them and produce clear, error-free work. Feedback can be oral or written. Oral feedback involves face-to-face discussions between teachers and students, while written feedback includes comments, corrections, and grades on students' written work (Cohen, 1990). Oral feedback is more effective for younger students, whereas written feedback is better for older students.

Peer feedback, based on the idea that writing is a social process, involves students providing comments and recommendations on each other's work. This technique helps students become more analytical and critical thinkers, fostering mutual learning and enhancing their writing skills (K. L. Hyland, 2010; Peterson, 2010; Tridinanti et al., 2020). The benefits of peer feedback include improved reading comprehension, increased writing critiques, diverse perspectives, and feedback on the clarity of ideas and language (D. R. Ferris, 2003).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of the data. According to Creswell (2021), mixed methods combine qualitative and quantitative approaches, while Sugiyono (2019) highlights that this integration yields more comprehensive and reliable data. The study utilizes a convergent parallel design, wherein both types of data are collected simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then compared to assess convergences and discrepancies.

The study involves a population of class XI students at SMKN 1 Rejotangan, with a sample of 31 students from class XI AKC 2 selected through purposive sampling. Data collection includes pre-tests and post-tests to evaluate writing abilities, with tests assessed using Jacob's rubric for content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Additionally, semi-structured interviews are conducted to gauge students' perceptions of the peer feedback method's effectiveness.

Data analysis involves normality and homogeneity tests, followed by paired sample t-tests for quantitative data. thematic analysis for qualitative data based from (Miles & Huberman, 1994)namely data reduction data display, and data conclusion. This mixed-methods

approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the impact of peer feedback on students' writing skills.

4. RESULTS

Quantitative Data Analysis

Table 1 The Normality Test Result

Tests of Normality							
	KELAS	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
HASIL	Pre Test	,167	31	,127	,937	31	,069
	Post Test	,112	31	,200*	,968	31	,468
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.							
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Normality testing was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method with the SPSS 27 software. This method involves comparing the total results of the pre-test and post-test writing. According to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov criteria, data is considered normally distributed if the coefficient value is greater than 0.05, and non-normal if the coefficient value is less than 0.05. The following are the results of these calculations. The calculation results show that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov coefficients are 0.127 for the pre-test and 0.200 for the post-test. Since these coefficients are greater than 0.05, the data obtained using the Likert scale questionnaire instrument are normally distributed.

Table 2 The Homogeneity Test Result

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
HASIL	Based on Mean	2,787	1	60	,100
	Based on Median	1,473	1	60	,230
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1,473	1	49,834	,231
	Based on trimmed mean	2,586	1	60	,113

The homogeneity test is used to compare the variances between the two groups, namely the pre-test and post-test. The conclusion is based on the significance value: if it exceeds 0.05, the data is considered homogeneous. Conversely, if the significance value is below 0.05, the data is deemed non-homogeneous. The results of the homogeneity test for the pre-test indicate a value of 0.100, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the pre-test data for both the experimental and control classes are homogeneous.

Table 3 The Paired Sample T Test Result

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PRE_TEST - POST TEST	-7,129	3,138	,564	-8,280	5,978	12,648	30	,000

The researchers used the paired sample t-test to compare pre-test and post-test scores from the same sample, assessing the impact of peer feedback on writing skills. They formulated hypotheses: the alternative hypothesis (H_a) suggested that peer feedback significantly improves students' recount text writing, while the null hypothesis (H_o) proposed no significant impact. The paired sample t-test results indicated a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.050, confirming a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This difference is attributed to the peer feedback treatment provided at SMKN 1 Rejotangan.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The researcher interviews 5 students with 5 questions. The first answer are using the peer feedback method simplifies learning recount texts by incorporating various perspectives from classmates. This approach not only makes learning more engaging but also aids in understanding the material from different angles. Additionally, it helps correct errors and directly enhances the quality of students' writing. This method shortens the learning process and emphasizes key points in the recount text.

The second answers are students believe that using peer feedback to learn recount texts is more efficient and time-saving compared to traditional methods. They pointed out that this approach minimizes time spent on lengthy teacher explanations, enables quicker comprehension through immediate feedback, and eliminates the usual wait for teacher evaluations. Real-time feedback from peers accelerates understanding and optimizes study time. This method is seen as efficient because students receive direct feedback from their classmates rather than from the teacher.

The third answers are the peer-to-peer feedback method makes learning more enjoyable compared to traditional methods. They feel that interaction with friends creates a more dynamic and interactive learning environment, boosting their self-confidence as they contribute to each other's development. The exchange of ideas and discussions among peers makes learning more engaging and less monotonous. High levels of communication help in understanding the

material and enhance students' social skills. This method results in shorter, more focused learning sessions, and students become more motivated and enthusiastic. Additionally, students feel free and actively involved in the learning process, leading to greater satisfaction and focus without becoming easily bored.

The fourth answers are the peer-to-peer feedback method is suitable for learning to write in English, according to some students. They state that this method is effective for material that requires repeated practice and evaluation, such as writing. However, there are also those who say that this method may not be suitable for material that requires a deep theoretical understanding. Some students also highlighted that adjustments are necessary depending on the type of material and level of difficulty. This method is considered useful for various writing materials, but needs to be adapted to the type of material and the student's ability to provide constructive feedback.

The fifth answers are the peer-to-peer feedback method has the benefit of increasing student participation and involvement, though it does come with drawbacks such as varying quality of feedback and a potentially noisy, less controlled classroom environment. However, students believe the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, as this method helps them understand the material more effectively through active engagement in the learning process.

5. DISCUSSION

The Efficacy of Peer Feedback in EFL Learning

The average test of the experimental class analysis then employed a paired sample t-test. The paired sample t-test on the experimental class showed a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This implies that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test sessions. This difference is attributed to the implementation of the peer feedback treatment. Thus, the alternative hypothesis can be accepted, and the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the conclusion that there is a significant impact of using peer feedback on students' learning outcomes in writing in the XI grade at SMKN 1 Rejotangan. This is consistent with the findings of (Montolalu & Langi, 2018) indicating that one individual (the research subject) receiving two different treatments is a common characteristic in paired sample t-test situations. Despite using the same individual, researchers obtain two sets of sample data: the first treatment data and the second treatment data.

The result of peer feedback research on EFL writing class has been related to several previous studies. First, Zhang (2023) research found that all three learners showed significant engagement increases, despite initial differences and challenges in proficiency and self-

efficacy. It also discusses how to enhance peer feedback in EAP writing courses. Second, in line with He & Gao (2023) analysis of feedback and drafts from 110 students revealed medium accuracy and low revision potential, with accuracy being a stronger predictor of implementation. The quality of peer feedback was generally low, but medium-quality feedback was most frequently used. Feedback quality, when combined with features and focus, significantly predicted implementation. Third, in line with (Gonzalez-Torres & Sarango, 2023) entitled has the result pre- and post-tests showed improved EFL writing skills with peer feedback being effective. Fourth, in line with Almutairi (2023) the experiment successfully fostered positive attitudes toward mixed feedback models, highlighted the usefulness of peer comments, and resulted in high feedback incorporation and writing scores. The study confirms the value of mixed feedback for improving students' English writing skills.

The Students' Response After using Peer Feedback in EFL Learning

Researchers interviewed five students on the effectiveness of the peer feedback method in learning recount texts. The students noted that this method provided diverse perspectives, facilitated understanding, and improved the quality of writing. It shortened study time by focusing on key points and fostering immediate correction of mistakes. This aligns with Iryanti (2015), who found that peer feedback enhances social and collaborative skills while deepening understanding. Similarly, Yuniarti et al., (2023) noted significant improvements in narrative text writing skills through this technique.

The peer feedback method is more time-efficient compared to traditional learning, as noted by the students, who appreciated the direct involvement and quicker feedback from peers. This conclusion is supported by Putra et al., (2021), which highlighted that peer feedback enhances communication and collaboration skills, speeding up the learning process. Wu & Schunn (2021) also recognized the effectiveness of peer review in improving writing performance.

Students found peer feedback more enjoyable than traditional methods due to the interactive and dynamic learning environment it created. This is consistent with Widyastuti et al. (2021), which reported that peer feedback improves writing skills by making learning more interactive and engaging, boosting confidence, motivation, and critical thinking abilities. Najogi & Adnan, (2019) also noted its effectiveness in developing students' confidence in writing analytical exposition texts.

The method is deemed suitable for other English learning materials, particularly writing tasks. However, students suggested that adjustments might be needed based on material type

and difficulty level. Marufiana (2018) found that peer feedback can also enhance reading skills, while Velez & dos Santos (2023) highlighted its benefits for improving spoken language skills.

Despite some challenges, such as variable feedback quality and classroom noise, the peer feedback method's benefits in increasing student participation and understanding are significant. Sharmin (2019) and Widyastuti et al. (2021) both emphasized the comprehensive feedback and community building advantages of peer feedback, making it a valuable method in educational contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

The study on XI AKC students at SMKN 1 Rejotangan aimed to test the normality and homogeneity of pre-test and post-test scores using quantitative methods. Results showed normal distributions for both tests, with significance levels exceeding the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test value of 0.050. Homogeneity testing indicated homogenous data for the experimental class, with a test value of 0.100 surpassing the criterion value of 0.05. Paired sample t-testing revealed significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores, attributed to the peer feedback treatment, thus confirming a positive impact of peer feedback on writing learning outcomes.

Qualitative findings from interviews with five students indicated that peer feedback provided diverse perspectives, made learning more engaging, and facilitated understanding and error correction. Students reported improved writing quality, shortened study time, and a more focused and enjoyable learning experience. These results align with previous research, showing that peer feedback enhances writing skills, promotes collaborative learning, critical thinking, and effective communication. Overall, the peer feedback method was found to be effective, efficient, and enjoyable for improving writing outcomes.

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