Knowledge E
Engaging minds

Conference Paper

The Influence of Peer Editing Technique on Students' Essay Writing Skill

Subadiyono

Language and Literature Indonesian Education, Department of Language and Art Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Science, Universitas Sriwijaya, South Sumatera, Indonesia

Abstract

This study aimed to describe the influence of the peer editing technique on students' essay writing in the Study program of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Science, Universitas Sriwijaya. Data were collected from 21 students of Indonesian and literature education. The results showed that the post-test mean score was higher than the pretest. In addition, the t-statistic was higher than the t-table: 8.638 > 1.724. This shows that the peer editing technique influenced students' essay writing. By using peer editing, five important aspects (format, mechanic, organization, and grammar) were emphasized in essay writing.

Keywords: essay writing, peer editing, education

Corresponding Author:
Subadiyono
badi_unsri@yahoo.com

🔓 **OPEN ACCESS**

1. Introduction

The skill of writing well-organized and insightful papers is very important for students if they are to be successful in most class requirements, at least in written assignments. Students should have the skill to write and know how to construct sentences well so that they are able to share their ideas and information through written language.

Writing is the act of constructing meaning while transacting meaning with text. A writer creates meaning through a combination of prior knowledge and previous experience; information emerging from the text; the stance he or she takes in relation to the text; and immediate, remembered, or anticipated social interaction and communication [1].

Points out that writing is a thinking process that generates, organizes, and exchanges one's ideas with the readers [2]. Effective writing needs pre-writing, organizing, drafting, revising, editing, and documenting of the final draft.

An essay has three main parts: an introductory paragraph consisting of two parts; a few general statements about the subject to attract the reader's attention; and a thesis statement to state the specific topic subdivisions [3]. The body consists of one or more paragraphs. Each paragraph develops a topic subdivision. The conclusion in an essay is a summary or review of the main points discussed in the body.

Writing an essay is not an easy task for students. Most of them may have difficulty not only in organizing the ideas effectively, but also with grammar and the rules of writing. In order to write a better essay, students need to revise or edit their own writing.

There are a lot of things to do in the process of text revision: firstly, checking the introduction and the conclusion of each text; secondly, verifying the first sentence or topic sentence of each paragraph carefully; thirdly, investigating each sentence thoroughly; and finally, checking sentences or paragraphs randomly [4].

It has been suggested that peer editing is a useful writing process as it gives a better understanding of students' writing skill. Therefore, the writer raises this topic for investigation. Specific peer feedback and critical peer feedback may help students enormously to improve their writing skills [5]. Peer feedback helped students become proficient writers [2].

Peer review, which is referred to under different names, such as peer response, peer feedback, peer editing, or peer evaluation, can be defined as the use of learners as sources of information and interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor, or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing [6].

Process of peer editing is divided into three stages: pre-training, peer editing, and post-peer editing. In the first stage, students received explanations, examples, and guidelines regarding peer editing [7]. An instructor prepared a peer editing checklist or rubric to guide students in correcting their peers' writing [3]. In the second stage, photocopies of the checklists for peer editors were provided to record their comments. In the third stage, students were asked to read their draft out loud to a small group of classmates and then to solicit oral comments and suggestions by asking the checklist questions.

Before starting the peer editing, students should have written an essay draft on a certain topic. The steps of conducting peer editing are as follows [8]:

1. Students choose the peers and exchange papers.

2. Students are given rubric sheets.

3. Students put their own names on the papers they are to edit.

4. Students read the essay.

5. Editors underline the mistakes.

6. After finishing, students get their paper back.

7. Based on the feedback they receive, students have to correct their mistakes.

8. While correcting their mistakes, they should consult the editor for clarification.

9. Students are reminded to discuss their mistakes with the editor and it is not guaranteed that all the peer's suggestions are correct.

Such a peer review has an extremely positive effect on group cohesion. It encourages students to monitor each other and, as a result, helps them to become better at self-monitoring [9]. Peer review is supported by process writing theory, which is connected with multiple drafting, extensive revision, and pair work, and collaborative learning theory, which takes learning as a social activity occurring through interaction with peers [10]. So the writer aimed to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in the essay writing skill of students who were taught by using the peer editing technique and those who were not.

2. Methods

The quasi-experiment method with a pretest and post-test was used in conducting this research. It investigated whether there was a possible influence in using the peer editing technique on students' essay writing in the experimental group and compared this with the results of the control group who had not used this technique.

The target of this research was 42 students from the Indonesian Language and Literature Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Science, Sriwijaya University. They were divided into a quasi-experimental and control group. Both of them consisted of 21 students.

3. Results

Before calculating the data by using a *t*-test, the writer calculated the score of the pretest and post-test in order to find the mean score, standard deviation, and standard error mean.

It can be seen in Table 1 that the mean pretest score was 58.66. Meanwhile, the mean post-test score was 84.61. This showed that the use of peer editing led to an improvement in students' essay writing skill. Next, the standard deviation of the post-test was 3.90, and 13.99 was the standard deviation of the pretest. The standard error mean of the post-test was 0.85, while 3.05 was the standard error mean of the pretest.

TABLE 1: Statistics.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	21	58.6667	13.99762	3.05453
Post-test	21	84.6190	3.90482	0.85210

TABLE 2: Results of paired samples test.

	Paired Differences					*t*	df	Sig (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence of Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre- and post-test	2.5952E1	13.76763	3.00343	19.68543	32.21933	8. 638	20 (1.72472)	0.000

On the other hand, the data were also analyzed by using a *t*-test with a significance of 95% (α = 0.05) using the SPSS 17 program. The writer used the scores of the pretest and post-test of essay writing. Table 2 shows the results of a paired sample *t*-test.

Table 2 shows that there was *t*-obtained and *t*-table. If *t*-obtained was higher than *t*-table, there was an improvement in the pretest and post-test. Meanwhile, if *t*-obtained was less than *t*-table, there was no improvement in the pretest and post-test. If *t*-obtained was higher than *t*-table, there was an improvement in the pretest and post-test. In Table 2, it can be seen that *t*-obtained was higher than *t*-table: 8.638 > 1.724. Therefore, there was a different mean score between the scores of the pretest and post-test after the use of peer editing.

The results indicate that the peer editing technique had an influence on students' essay writing skill. Before using peer editing, there were a lot of mistakes in students'

essay writing. A number of their mistakes were in terms of formation, mechanic, contents, organization, and grammar. After using the peer editing technique, post-test score for their essay writing increased.

According to Susser (1994, p. 35), one of the main elements of the process of writing is making students aware that writing is "a process discovery in which ideas are generated and not just transcribed [11]." To make writing a process discovery, various types of activities are carried out in the writing classroom, one of which is peer editing, which can provide students with opportunities to discover and explore ideas. Furthermore, pointed out that peer feedback sessions can lead to the creation of students who can assess and improve their own writing [7].

3.1. Format

The format aspect in essay writing has four components: (1) the title is in the center of the page; (2) the first line of every paragraph is stick; (3) there is a margin on both sides; (4) the text is double-spaced.

From 21 data in the pretest, there was only one student who could not write according to the format aspect of essay writing. The title was not in the center of the page. After the peer editing process, the results of students' writing were improved. There were no more mistakes on the basis of format.

3.2. Mechanics

In writing an essay, three components are considered: (1) punctuation, (2) capitalization, and (3) letter writing. Before the peer editing treatment, most of the students made mistakes. In contrast, the students were able to avoid mistakes after receiving the treatment.

3.3. Organization

There are eight components in the organization of essay writing: (1) the completeness of the framework, (2) the introduction, which ends with a thesis statement, (3) each paragraph discusses new points and begins with a clear topic sentence, (4) each paragraph has specific support, (5) unity, (6) integration, (7) transitional signals, (8) a conclusion.

In the pretest, some of the students did not write an essay based on a framework, that is, an introduction, content, and a conclusion. In these cases, the results of the post-test showed that there was an improvement in students' writing.

Next was the conclusion's summarizing main point or thesis statement. In the pretest, there were ten students who did not write a concluding paragraph as they only wrote one or two paragraphs. The others did write such a paragraph but they did not conclude the main point.

On the other hand, the results of the post-test showed that all of the students had written a concluding paragraph, and some of the students had written it properly, summarizing the main point explained. Here is the example:

> So, the smoking habit should be avoided as it has bad effects: health disturbance, pollution, and worst of all death. We should improve our quality of life by applying nonsmoking areas and decreasing the smoke production that threatens others' lives.

4. Conclusion

Peer editing technique influenced student's essay writing. Results of the post-test showed that all of the students had written a concluding paragraph, and some of the students had written it properly. By using peer editing, five important aspects (format, mechanic, organization, and grammar) were emphasized in essay writing.

Acknowledgement

Before applying peer editing technique to students' essay writing, there were several mistakes in terms of mechanic, content, organization, and grammar. Some of the students have difficulty in essay writing because of their lack of important aspect in these kinds of writing genre. However, having applied the process of technique editing, the students' essay writing skill could be improved. This improvement existed as each student revised his or her writing after editing process by the other student. After the treatment, the students were able to improve their writing because during the process of peer editing, each student got suggestion from other students, and the corrections were made based on the suggestions.

References

[1] Ruddell, M. R. (2005). *Teaching Content Reading and Writing*. Hoboken: John Willy & Sons Inc.

[2] Yugandhar, K. (2015). Practicing teacher organized peer review to Advance EFL students' writing skills. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 25–29.

[3] Oshima, A. and Hogue, A. (1999). *Writing Academic English*. New York, NY: Longman.

[4] Calderonello, A. H. and Bruce, L. E. (1996). *Rough Drafts: The Process of Writing*. Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company.

[5] Godlee, F., Gale, C. R., and Martyn, C. N. (1998). Effect on the quality of peer review of blinding peer reviewers and asking them to sign their reports. *JAMA,* vol. 280, pp. 237–240.

[6] Liu, J. and Hansen, J. (2002). *Peer Response in Second Language Writing Classroom.* Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.

[7] Rosnida, A. and Zainal, I. Z. (2011). Peer editing practice in the writing classroom: Benefits and drawbacks. *ALLS*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 92–93.

[8] Carson, J. G. and Nelson, G. L. (1996). Chinese students' perceptions of ESL Peer Response Group Interaction. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 1–19.

[9] Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (fourth edition). Cambridge: Pearson Longman.

[10] Rouhi, A. and Azizian, E. (2016). Peer review: Is giving corrective feedback better than receiving it in L2 Writing. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 93, no. 21, pp. 49–1354.

[11] Brown, H. D. (2007). Teaching By Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy (fifth edition). New York: Pearson Education.