

Applying Peer Review to Improve Students' Descriptive Writing Text

Devi Oktaviani¹, Aisyah Pratiwi²

¹ IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung

² IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung

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ABSTRACT

This research is conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in students' descriptive writing score after being treated using peer review compared to those students who did not get the same treatment. This is a quasi-experimental research design with one group as the experimental and one group as the control. Pre-test and post-test were also administered before and after the 10 times treatment given. The population of this research are all of the seventh-grade students in Bangka Island by the total 80 students. Meanwhile, 50 students from two different classes were the sample of this research. The result of this research showed that the *t*-obtained in equal variances assumed 6.353 and the significant (2-tailed) was 0.00. Since *t*-obtained was higher than *t*-table (2.02) and the significant (2-tailed) was lower than computation with level significant (0.05), it could be stated that there was a significant difference in post-test between the experimental class and control class. It can be concluded that the using of peer review is able to improve the students' descriptive writing score significantly.



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Correspondence:

Devi Oktaviani

Email: devioktaviani202391@gmail.com

Introduction

English is one of the most important languages because English is an international language that is needed by people around the world. By using English, we can interact, converse, and share to the other people who use different language from us. It can help anyone to transfer and gain knowledge, science and technology, art, culture and establish international relationship. In this globalization era, the existence of English has a big role in human's life. Almost all sectors of human's activities use English, such as education, medical, business, science, technology, tourism, even politics.

English has four skills. They are speaking, reading, writing, and listening. In addition, the students also study grammar, structure and vocabulary (Alen, 1999). In Indonesia, English was regarded as a foreign language which has been learned from elementary school to the University level. Therefore, a teacher should think how to teach and guide students during his/her teaching. The teacher has to make a new innovation in teaching learning process because it could help students to learn English better in order to avoid getting bored up in learning English (Harmer, 2001). In addition, the effective teaching and learning process starts by attempting to understand what people in the classroom are trying to do, and how they go about trying to do effectively (McDonald & Cooper, 1996). In other words, we need some kind of effort and practice. If we always do the practice we can improve our ability. According to Brown teaching could be defined as helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand (Brown, 2007). Then, a teacher must be able to help their students not only to gain a comprehension but also to absorb the meaning fully. An English teacher must be certain that his/her students master the four language skills from the receptive to the production such as writing.

During the preliminary observation by looking at the learning process in the class conducted at SMPN 1 Kepulauan Pongok, the researchers the students' writing is one of the problems faced by the seventh grade students' SMPN 1 Kepulauan Pongok. Meanwhile the students' interview, the researchers found that the students experience difficulties in learning English, especially in writing. The researchers found

some the students always lack of vocabularies. They got confused about grammar or tenses that be used in their writing. And they got difficulties to develop a paragraph. It is caused by the lack of cohesiveness and coherence. The students didn't have a good guidance of how to write systematically.

Furthermore, based on the interview with English teacher of class VII, there were some problems that teachers felt when teaching English in classroom. Firstly, the teacher found the difficulties when teaching English. The students got difficult to study listening, speaking, writing and reading. Especially in writing. Because students' have lack of vocabularies and not all students have good motivation for learning writing. Secondly, the students seemed still confused about what they should write.

Then, based on the result of the preliminary writing test. To measure as the writing ability, the researchers evaluated it based on several areas, such as the content, organization, structure, and mechanics. The content refers to the idea of the paragraph; organization refers to the paragraph organization, structure refers to grammar in the paragraph and mechanics is the area of punctuation and spelling. The result of the pre-test in the preliminary study shows, the lowest score aspect is content. The total score class VII A (52,87) the second total class VII B (50,28). Category from two class is still poor.

The researchers chose descriptive text because it is one of texts that should be learned by the students in the curriculum of junior high school made by the government, and also based on the teacher suggestion. The results of the students' skills in writing were still far from the minimum requirement criterion (*KKM*). They are still lack of vocabulary which make them get difficult to compose any writing texts. Besides that, they also have some problems in grammatical sentences, the content of topic, and express their idea in a good writing.

Those unfortunate conditions of students' writing skill led this research to its objective to improve their writing skill using peer review activity with descriptive text as the limitation. Writing is the process an activity that writer skill includes all knowledge and abilities related to expressing ideas through the written word. According to Houge, good writing is more than just using correct grammar. It also means thinking, planning, checking, and revising (Hogue, 1996). Harmer described that writing (as one of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing) has always formed part of the syllabus in variety of purposes, ranging from being merely a 'backup' for grammar teaching to a major syllabus strand in its own right, where mastering the ability to write effectively is seen as a key objective for learners (Harmer, 2004).

Writing is one of the most important skill in learning language, not only learning English but also in other language. When people learned a language, it can not be avoided that they need to write it. Therefore, teaching writing to the students is one of the main principles in teaching and learning process. Generally, writing is needed as medium which people can share what they have in mind. According to Ploeger, writing is discovering what you know and feel something, and writing is communicating that knowledge to your audience (Ploeger, 1999). According to Harmer that writing is a way to produce language and express our idea, feeling and opinion (Harmer, 2001). It means writing can help us to express our idea, feeling, opinion about many things. Writing is not instant process. We need some steps to make a good writing. Languid argued that writing is a process because it is steps. You do not have to get it right all at once. Just get started well in advance. If you allow yourself enough time, you would find a way to make a paper come together. Then, Harmer also stated that the students need to learn and practice the art of putting words together in well-formed sentences, paragraphs, and texts (Harmer, 2004). In addition writing as a process to produce language and express ideas, feeling and opinion need practice. If we always do practice to write something, we can improve our writing skills. According to Heaton "The following analysis attempts to group the many and varied skill necessary for writing good prose into five general components or main ideas, which are language use: the ability to write correct and appropriate sentences. Mechanical skills: the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language, for example punctuation and spelling. Treatment of content: the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information. Style skills: the ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs and use language effectively. Judgement skills: the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize, and order relevant information. From the explanation above, the researchers concluded that writing is a process of expressing and communicating a writer's idea on a piece of paper by using appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary to the readers in written form (Heaton, 1988).

Peer review technique is one of important activities in writing process. According to Raimes, peer review technique is one of techniques in responding to students writing (Raimes, 1983). In general, peer review technique involves students' interaction in learning process. Liu and Hansen also stated that peer review is an interaction which involves students to exchange information. In addition, the students have a role and responsibility in commenting on and critiquing others' writing in both written and oral formats in the process of writing (Liu & Hansen, 2005). It means that peer review is an activity done in the process of

writing to increase students' interaction by exchanging information, commenting on and critiquing others' writing.

According to Bartels, peer review is also referred to as peer editing, peer response, peer evaluation, and peer feedback, in which students read each other's writing and provide feedback to the researchers. Peer review is an activity in process of students' writing to responding to each other's writing (Bartels, 2003). So, peer review is not only reviewing others' writing, but also editing, evaluating, and giving feedback to others' writing. It can be said that by using peer review technique the students can increase their ability to be more active in writing process. From those statements above, it can be concluded that peer review technique is one of the good editing techniques in writing process. It involves students as the main part of teaching learning process. They have to be more creative and more critical by giving constructive feedback to other peers and allow them to evaluate their organization, context, grammar, punctuation and spelling, and style.

Descriptive text is a text which is say what a person or thing is like, its purpose is describe and reveal a particular person place or thing (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). Descriptive text is a text which describes person, place, mood, situation and etc, in words. Similar to Diane A. Wilbur said that descriptive writing is to create a clear picture on impression of person, place or object. Fred D. White also stated that descriptive text is drawing in words (White, 1986).

All kind of texts have different text organization. It depends on the purpose of the text writing. Here are the generic structure of descriptive text according to Gerot and Wignell stated that descriptive text has identification which identifies phenomenon to be describes and description which describes parts, qualities, characteristics (Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

According to the theories above the researchers makes a concept about definition of descriptive text. First, descriptive text is a text of English for describe like what a something or human life from seeing by looking, smells, sound or texture from that something or that human life. Second, descriptive writing is one type of text used to describe place, things, people, or another object.

In descriptive writing actually first thing that must be conducted before writing is to know the object of description. As explained before that descriptive writing describes person, place or thing in a way that enables the reader to visualize it, descriptive text is a kind of text with a purpose to give information. The context of this text is description of particular thing, animal, persons, or others for instance: our pets or a person we know well. In this paper the researchers presented an example of descriptive text.

There were several previous studies thesis which related to the researchers' study such as by Rani which employed a collaborative classroom action research and she did research to senior high school (Rani, 2016); Faisal and Wulandari whose participants were the students of junior high school. The method of the research of Classroom Action Research (CAR) and use Burhan Nurgiyantoro's writing evaluation criteria which consisted of evaluation in content, organization, vocabulary, language, mechanic and the method of this research in Classroom Action Research (CAR) (Faisal & Wulandari, 2013); and Rahayu which in her study only focused on describing animal (Rahayu, 2017). In other words, there was no such research on improving students' descriptive text using peer reviewing technique with quasi-experimental research as the design and animal, my best friend and historical place as the topic.

In this research there are two hypotheses which are the null and alternative hypothesis; H_0 : there was no significant difference in writing descriptive text between the students who are taught by using peer reviewing technique and who are not. While H_a : There was a significant difference in writing descriptive text between the students who are taught by using peer reviewing technique and who are not.

Method

This research used the second type of experimental, which is quasi-experimental design in which the participations both are not randomly selected from a specified population and assigned to experimental and control group. Pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design is one of the common quasi-experimental designs. In this quasi-experimental design, the researchers used the pre-test and post-test non-equivalent control design. In this design, there are two groups an experimental group which received the special treatment and control group which did not. The pre-test administered before the treatment and post test was administer after the treatment. In this case, the researchers treated the experimental group by using peer review technique.

In a research, there are two techniques that can be used to determine the data research source population and sample. In this study, the researchers used two classes, one class as the experimental group and the other as the control group.

Table 1 <Sample of Study>

Group	Class	Male	Female	Number of Student
Experimental	VII A	11	14	25
Control	VII B	10	15	25
Rata-rata		21	29	50

To make sure that this research can be measured, a tool is needed to measure the students' improvement in writing procedure text. In this research, the students will be given the pre-test and post-test by the researchers in order to test the group of student. In pre-test and post-test are the same in form as well as its content. In pre-test and post-test researcher apply free writing. In this research, the researcher asked to the student write a paragraph of descriptive text certain title in form of paragraph minimum 50 words. The topic was about animal; horse and elephant, my best friend, temple and historical place.

Firstly, both the experimental group and control group had the pre-test before the lesson begin to know the students knowledge of material that will be taught. Secondly, both the experiment group and control group were given the teaching and learning process. The experiment group use Peer Review Technique and control group without using Peer Review.

In this part, the researchers focus on the items in the elements of writing, they are; content, organization, structure, and mechanic. Content refers to the idea of paragraph; organization refers to the paragraph organization, coherence and the use of cohesive devices; structure refers to grammar and word order; and mechanics refers to the area of punctuation and spelling.

To avoid of the text and the subjectivity in scoring, the researchers is helped by raters, namely Nurul Hidayah and Fenny. The researchers give the result of students' writing test to the rater such as writing test validity, pre-test and post-test. Then the researchers gave the score to the students' writing test based on the criteria of the writing score. The table of evaluation is adopt from the paragraph evaluation of Boardman from University of Arkansas, USA.

In the technique of data analysis, the researchers use SPSS 16 (Statistical Package for the social Science) in calculate the data. The researchers used matched t-test to know whether or not there is significant in writing achievement between the experimental group and control group, and the students; writing achievement in writing descriptive text or not.

Try-out of the test was given to the other students in the different school with the same level. The try-out was tested in SMPN 2 Kepulauan Pongok especially in class VII with a total number of 40 students. Try-out of writing test was an instruction to make descriptive paragraph minimum 50 words and based on three topics (in this study, Animal, my best friend, candi borobudur, historical place) to identify whether the students understand the instruction or not by checking students' writing. The data from the students' writing descriptive text was assessed by two raters.

For content validity of a test, the researchers matched the content of descriptive texts in the instrument with the content of descriptive text in the syllabus and handbook of seventh grade students. After doing test of the content validity, the researchers found that descriptive text had the similarities to the of content with the material in the syllabus and handbook. The similarities were seen from the kind of descriptive text in the syllabus or handbook and in the instrument.

Based on the calculation in, the reliability coefficient of the test was 0.909. According to Wallen, "for research purpose, a useful rule of thumb is that reliability should be at least 0.70 and preferably higher" (Fraenkel & Wellen, 2006). Since the reliability coefficient of test was higher than 0.70, the test was considered reliable.

Results and Discussions

In this study, the result of the pre-test and the post-test experimental and control class were analyzed by using t-test. The analysis was calculated by using SPSS 22 (statistical package for social sciences) program. First of all, the statistical analysis of students' pretest both in experimental dan control group was examined and followed by the statistical analysis of students' pre-test and post-test score in experimental class and the statistical analysis of students' pre-test and post-test control class. Then, the difference analysis of students' post-test between experimental class and control class was presented.

To guarantee that students' writing ability in both experimental and control group are almost similar, the mean of those group pre-test was examined. Here are the results:

Table 2 <Paired Sample Statistic of Experimental Group>

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre Test Experimental	40	72,6500	2,64624	,41841
Pre Test Control	40	65,2000	3,16390	,50026

Based on group statistic above, the mean of pre-test in experimental class was 72.65, the standard deviation was 2.64 and standard error mean was 0.41. Meanwhile, the mean of pre-test in control class was 65.20, the standard deviation was 3.16, and the standard error mean was 0.50.

Table 3 <Paired Sample Test>

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1,430	,235	11,423	78	,000	7,45000	,65217	6,15164	1,430
Equal variances not assumed			11,423	75,636	,000	7,45000	,65217	6,15100	

The result of independent sample test-table, showed the mean between pre-test of experimental class and pre-test of control class in equal variances assumed or equal variances not were assumed 7.45, standard error differences in equal variances assumed was 0.65, standard error differences in equal variances not assumed was 0.65, t-obtained in equal variances assumed was 11.42, and the significant (2-tailed) was 0.00 since t-obtained was lower than t-table (2.02) and the significant (2-tailed) was higher than computation with level significant (0.05), it could be stated that there was no significant difference in pre-test between the experimental class and control class. It showed that the students' descriptive text writing ability is almost similar.

Here are the results of SPSS computation for the students' pre-test and post-test score in experimental class:

Table 4 <Paired Sample Statistic of Experimental Group>

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre Test Experimental	76,6500	40	2,64624	,41841
Post Test Experimental	82,2500	40	4,10597	,64921

Based on table above, paired sample test statistic showed that the mean of pre-test was 72.65, the standard deviation was 2.64. The standard error mean was 0.41, while the mean of post-test was 81.25, the standard deviation was 4,105 and the standard error mean was 0,649.

Table 5 <Paired Samples Correlation>

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pre_Test (Experimental) & Post_Test (Experimental)	40	,454	,003

Paired sample table above for the correlation showed that the correlation between pre-test and post-test of the experimental class was 0.454 with probability (sig.) score was lower than 0,05. It means that the correlation between pre-test and post-test of experimental class was significant.

Table 6 <Paired Sample Test>

Paired Differences									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
				Lower	Upper				
Pre_Test (Experimental) - Post_Test (Experimental)	-8,60000	3,74029	,59139	-9,79620	-7,40380	-14,542	39	,000	

The result of paired sample differences showed that the mean between pre-test and post-test in experimental class was -8.60, standard deviation was 3.740, standard error mean was 0.591 and t-obtained was -14.542. At the significant level of >0.05 for two tailed test and degree of freedom 39 t-table 2.02, since the value of t-obtained was higher than t-table, and significant (2-tailed) was lower computation with level significant (0.05), it could be stated that there was an improvement in students' writing skill before and after the treatment by using peer reviewing technique in experimental class.

After having the statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test for the control group, the researchers also conducted an analysis for the pre-test and post-test of the control group. Here are the results:

Table 7 <Paired Sample Statistic of Control Group>

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre Test Control	65,2000	40	3,16390	,50026
Post Test Control	76,6250	40	2,08397	,32951

Based on the table result above from paired sample statistic of the control class above, the mean of pre-test was 65.20, the standard deviation was 3.163, and standard error mean was 0.500, while the post-test was 76.62, the standard deviation was 2.083 and the standard error mean was 0.32.

Table 8 <Paired Samples Correlation>

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pre_Test (Control) & Post_Test (Control)	40	,156	,338

Based on the table 9 paired sample correlation showed that the correlation between pre-test and post-test of the control class was 0.156 with probability score was higher than 0.05. It means that the correlation between pre-test and post-test of control class was not significant.

Table 9 <Paired Sample Test>

	Paired Differences							Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Df	
				Lower	Upper			
Pre_Test (Control) - Post_Test (Control)	-11,42500	3,50741	,55457	-12,54672	10,30328	-20,602	39	,000

The result of paired sample difference showed the mean between pre-test and post-test in control class was -11.42500, standard deviation was 3.507, standard error mean was 0.554 and t-obtained was -20.602. At the significant level of $p > 0.05$ for two test and degree of freedom 39, t-table was 2.02. Since the value of t-obtained was higher than t-table, it could be stated that there was a significant difference in students writing skill before and after the treatment in control class.

The next calculation is for the post-test of experimental and control group post-test to obtain the differences of those two tests final result. Then, this result will be used to test the hypotheses of this research.

Table 10 <Paired Sample Statistic of Experimental and Control Group Post Test>

Class	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post Test Experimental	82,2500	40	4,10597	,64921
Post Test Control	76,6250	40	2,08397	,32951

Derived the group statistics above, the mean of post-test in experimental class was 82.25, the standard deviation was 4.10 the standard error mean was 0.649. Meanwhile, the mean of post-test was 76.62, the standard deviation was 2.083, the standard error in control class was 0.329.

Table 11 <Independent Sample Test>

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	13,532	,000	6,353	78	,000	4,62500	,72804	3,17558	6,07442
Equal variances not assumed			6,353	57,843	,000	4,62500	,72804	3,16758	6,08242

The result of independent samples test table showed the mean between post-test of experimental class and post-test of control class in equal variances assumed or equal variance not assumed were 4.625, standard error difference in equal variances assumed was 0.728, standard error differences in equal

variances not assumed was 0.728, t-obtained in equal variances assumed 6.353 and the significant (2-tailed) was 0.00. Since t-obtained was higher than t-table (2.02) and the significant (2-tailed) was lower than computation with level significant (0.05), it could be stated that there was a significant difference in post-test between the experimental class and control class.

In this part, the researchers would like to describe in detail some of interpretations of research result. After doing the observation, the researchers could interpret that the process of teaching and learning writing skill of descriptive text by using peer reviewing technique and non-peer reviewing technique has been conducted effectively.

In the experimental class, the researchers using peer reviewing technique in the process of teaching and learning in order to students' improve writing skill.

In conclusion, it was found that the usage of peer reviewing technique could encourage the students' motivation and interested in learning writing.

The easier steps in applying peer reviewing technique in teaching writing of descriptive text is arrange the sentence to be a good sentence in prewriting. After that, the most difficult steps in applying peer reviewing technique in teaching writing of descriptive text is find the topic sentence, identification and

Conclusions

The peer reviewing was effectively useful to help students to write faster, easier and focus on writing of specific information in their text. Furthermore, from the result of statistical analysis of the test during the experiment, it can be concluded that the teaching of writing descriptive text using peer reviewing technique helps students in improving their writing achievement. Based on the result of the test, the students who were taught by peer reviewing technique got better score on their post-test than their pre-test. It can be seen from the mean score (81.25) of the post-test in experimental group which was higher than the mean score (76.62) of the pre-test in experimental class.

In addition, the result of comparative analysis of independent sample t-test showed that there was a significant difference in the post-test score between students who learned by using peer reviewing technique and the students who did not. It could be seen from the mean score (76.62) of post-test in experimental group which was higher than the mean score (65.20) of the post-test in control class. Thus, it can be inferred that the null hypothesis was rejected, and the research hypothesis was accepted. Consequently, peer reviewing technique is one of the effective ways in improving students' writing skill.

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