THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PEER ASSESSMENT IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS’ WRITING OF RECOUNT TEXT
(A pre-experimental study at second grade students in one of Public Senior High Schools in Garut, Indonesia)

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Abstract
This study is aimed at examining the effectiveness of peer assessment in developing students’ writing of recount text and to find out whether or not students give positive responses on the use of it. The participants of this study consisted of thirty-two learners from the second grade of a public senior high school in Garut. This study implemented pre-experimental design as the research method. The data were obtained from English writing ability test involving the pre-test and post-test in order to know the students’ writing ability before and after using peer assessment. The questionnaire as the second instrument of this research is given to the students to see their responses of the use of peer assessment. Both results of the instruments were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS Ver.24 and using the chart application on Microsoft Excel 2016. Therefore, the findings reveal that peer assessment is effective in developing students’ writing of recount text and students give the positive response on the use of it. Based on these findings, it is recommended to implement peer assessment in teaching and learning program.

Keywords: writing, peer assessment, recount text.

INTRODUCTION
Writing is an essential skill for a person’s intellectual and communicative development; it shows one’s thinking development. In line with this, Alwasilah (2005) states that writing has been proved as a language activity that helps students have the complex linguistic and cognitive abilities such as organizing, structuring, and revising. In addition, Eggen & Kauchak (2007) state that language, especially writing, is a beneficial tool used to express one’s thought and impart culture. Therefore, it is concluded that a person’s ability to write is the result of his/her thinking development through the complex thinking process.

In addition, writing is claimed as a written product is product of thinking, drafting, and revising that requires specialized skills to generate ideas, to organize them coherently, to use discourse markers and rhetorical conventions to put them cohesively into a written text, to revise text for clearer meaning, to edit text for appropriate grammar, and to produce a final product. Writing is a progressive activity. This means that when you first write something down, you have already been thinking about what you are going to say and how you are going to say it. Then after you have finished writing, you read over what you have written and make changes and corrections. Therefore, writing is never a one-step actions; it is a process that has several steps.
In fact, many learners feel that writing is hard. They hardly communicate through writing because of various problems such as, vocabulary, expressions, grammatical constructions, writing mechanism, idea organization, and writing steps itself (Swanson, 2001). Therefore, developing writing skill has often been difficult and challenging to the learner. Furthermore, Kasper (2000) states that learners need to put all the time and effort in learning and practicing about how to organize ideas as well as language elements. Consequently, those problems become an obstacle for the learners to gain a good result on their writing.

At present, however, with new teaching approaches, the learners start to take certain responsibility by learning how to take part in assessing themselves and as peer assessor in writing process. This form of assessment is recommended by Shepard (2000) and Topping (1998) as one of the effective approaches for classroom evaluation. It can also be considered as an opportunity for students as learning facilitator and also used as a tool for instructors to obtain a clearer and obvious picture of learner’s performance. Based on the previous statements, peer assessment can be considered to be one of the main forms of alternative assessments to evaluate students’ work.

Peer assessment, therefore, is a type of assessment processes which involves the learners’ participation. It can reflect the effectiveness of the learners’ feedback and cooperation as well as enhance learners’ awareness of self-learning and self-esteem. Topping (2008) suggests that in peer assessment, learners have to determine the standard or quality of the work written by learners of the same academic level, plan the learning process together, indicate peer’s strengths and weaknesses and outline the scope of editing the writing. Additionally, Forman & Cazden (1986) add that in assessing peer’s work, learners need to be always alert and attentive as resulting in cognitive strengthening, and at the same time, acknowledging the importance of assessing others and having positive attitude toward their work are assessed and edited by peer. Through the assessing and editing process learners become more patient, responsible, and cautious and in how to think systematically. They also enjoy reading and writing more which can lead to increase life skills through writing.

In the matter of this, the use of peer assessment remains to be investigated further, in other context especially in Indonesia. This need is in relevant with the implementation of peer assessment itself which is still relatively new in education system of Indonesia. More specifically, this type of assessment is suggested in Kurikulum 2013 which has not been so long implemented. Additionally, this study chose recount text as the writing genre for the students to be developed. Butt (2003) states that recount text is kind of text which tell the sequence of events happened and evaluate them. In line with this, recount text was chosen because of its relation to the syllabus of Kurikulum 2013 in English lesson in senior high school. Recount text is written on the syllabus to be taught for most every grades of senior high school. Therefore, the use of peer assessment is recommended to be applied in teaching learning program especially in teaching writing of recount text.

Related to the gap as mentioned above, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of peer assessment in developing students’ writing of recount text. It was carried out in order to gain insight for developing the administration and teaching English writing ability.
**Peer Assessment**

Many definitions exist about what constitutes peer assessment. According to Mowl and McDowell (1996), peer assessment is assessment of students done by other students, both formative reviews to provide feedback and summative grading, which aims to improve the quality of learning and empower learners. It can include student involvement not only in the final judgements made of student work but also in the prior setting of criteria and the selection of evidence of achievement (Biggs, 1999; Brown, Rust and Gibbs, 1994). Similarly, Falchicov (2007) states that peer assessment obligates students to provide either feedback or grades (or both) to their peers in the form of product or performance, based on the criteria of excellence for that product.

Peer assessment is one of assessment techniques, it is included in alternative assessment. Brown (2003) states that alternative assessment also called as a performance assessment since it is designed to assess students’ understanding about the materials given. This kind of assessment techniques give students feedback on how well they understand the information and what they need to improve, while helping teachers to make a better instruction.

Further, Topping (1996) describes the potential advantages of peer tutoring, including the development of the skills of evaluating and justifying, and using discipline knowledge. Students can also help each other to make sense of the gaps in their learning and understanding and to get a more sophisticated grasp of the learning process. Students who receive feedback from their peers can get a wider range of ideas about their work to promote development and improvement.

Brown, Rust and Gibbs (1994), Zariski (1996), Race (1998) and others have described some potential advantages of peer assessment for students as discussed below.

1. Giving a sense of ownership of the assessment process, improving motivation. It means that students will try to produce their original writing which is different from their friends and motivating themselves to make the better writing product than others.
2. Encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning, developing them as autonomous learners. When the students have their own responsibility to judge their own work, they are automatically developing their ability and will try to do the same thing when they judge their peer work.
3. Treating assessment as part of learning, so that mistakes are opportunities rather than failures. The students who do peer assessment are used to reflect their work, therefore, when they meet some mistakes, they take it as a motivation to be better on the next task.
4. Practicing the transferable skills needed for life-long learning, especially evaluation skills. It means, the students who use peer assessment may have open minded behavior in their life, they try to accept their peer judgement and use it to be self-reminder.
5. Using external evaluation to provide a model for internal self-assessment of a student’s own learning (metacognition), and encouraging deep rather than surface learning. Every judgment from students’ peer will make each students have self-orientation for their writing product when they will start the new one.
Self and peer assessment "promote lifelong learning, by helping students to evaluate their own and their peers’ achievements realistically, not just encouraging them always to rely on (tutor) evaluation from on high" (Brown, 1996).

RESEARCH DESIGN
This research utilized the pre-experimental design: one-group pretest-post-test in a quantitative form. The close-ended questionnaire in form of five-level Likert item were also employed.

Research Site and Participant
The research site of this study was one of the public senior high schools in Garut. The school was chosen because it had been one of the selected school implementing Kurikulum 2013 as the latest curriculum that include peer assessment in teaching and learning activity. Further more, this school represented the students in Garut region and it was easily accessed. Moreover, the participants of this study consisted of thirty two students with the variety of background; aptitude, basic skill, family background, and socioeconomy.

Research Instrument and Data Analysis
In this research, the data were collected through the pre-test and post-test. Additionally, the data were gathered also from the questionnaires. The procedure of analyzing the data comprised some steps.

First, the data were collected from students’ writing performance in the pre-test and post-test. In pre-test and post-test, the students were instructed to write a recount text based on the topic that had been provided, the topic of students’ text was about the students’ past experiences. The scoring guide was chosen as the criteria of scoring represents the basic aspects of writing and the genre moves of recount text (Boot, Fahey, Fezz., 2000). Second, the scores gained were calculated by applying the statistical analysis of T-test to determine how mean of the pre-test was different from the post-test score. Then, the significance of the test was calculated by using computer program of Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) Ver.24. The final step after calculating the data from pre-test and post-test, was analyzing the questionnaires. The questionnaires were analyzed based on the frequency of the students’ answer, then the results were calculated and interpreted into the table of students’ responses. The list of data in the table showed in form of pie chart by using charts tool on Microsoft Excel 2016 application.

The close-ended questionnaire was constructed to investigate the learners’ response. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items asking the subjects about their response of assessing peers’ work and their writing being assessed by peer. Close ended type of questionnaire was used since the answers of the questions included in the questionnaires were limited to the stated alternatives. The result of questionnaire were computed on Microsoft Excel 2016 application and visualized by pie chart.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
The Effectiveness of Peer Assessment on Students’ Writing of Recount Text
This study employed the quantitative design and used the statistical calculation, as stated in chapter three. The result of the test employed the Paired Sample T-test in
examining the hypothesis. This test was used since it functions is to find out the difference of the students’ performance by comparing two Means (Hatch & Hossein, 1982). Moreover, the details of the data are provided in the following section.

**Statistical Result of Paired Sample T-test for General Writing**

In this study, there were thirty-two students participating in both pre-test and post-test. In each test, every student was asked to write a recount text about his or her experience. The scoring process for the pre-test and post-test was done by the researcher, the writing score of the test was divided into two categories, the first category was general writing scoring and the second one was genre based writing scoring. Moreover, the scores of the pre-test and post-test are visualized in the line chart below.

![Chart 5.1 General Writing Chart](image1)

![Chart 5.2 Genre Based Writing Chart](image2)

The line charts above show the statistical description of the score of students as result of pre-test and post-test, both charts show that the students improve their writing score in the post-test after using peer assessment, it visualizes with the red line.

**Paired Sample T-test**

The Paired Sample T-test was used to reveal the significant Means of the Pre-test and Post-test of the same participants. This test is used to examine the hypotheses as formulated as follow.

- Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no difference between students’ writing scores before and after using peer assessment.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): There is a difference between students’ writing scores before and after using peer assessment.

There are two tables of Paired Sample T-test, the first table shows the statistical calculation of students’ writing scores in general writing analysis and the second table shows the statistical calculation of students’ writing scores in genre based writing analysis. The statistical calculation of students’ writing scores in general writing is written below.
The first table above shows that $t_{\text{observed}} = -6.262$ and the second table presents that $t_{\text{observed}} = -4.749$, those mean that both results are lower than the critical value meaning that it lies out of the accepted area of $H_0$. Therefore, $H_0$ is rejected and $H_a$ is accepted. From both data above, it can be verified that peer assessment is effective in developing students’ writing of recount text. Therefore, the first research question has been answered. Moreover, this verification is also supported by the second research question, asking about students’ responses of the use of peer assessment. The result of students’ responses on the use of peer assessment is answered in the next section.

**Students’ Responses on the Use of Peer Assessment**

Students’ writing of recount text developed after the students had used peer assessment in their classroom learning activity. Moreover, the questionnaire which consisted of twenty-five questions was given to thirty-two students in order to find out their responses on the use of peer assessment to support the first answer of research question. The result of students’ response was taken from the total value of each students and it was interpreted to the agreement scales and it is presented in pie chart below.
The pie chart above shows that students responded positively on the use of peer assessment in writing class, it can be seen from the percentage that 87% of students agree with the use of peer assessment in their writing class, and there is no negative answer.

DISCUSSION

Based on findings in this study, there are some points that need to be discussed about the effectiveness of peer assessment in developing students’ writing of recount text. More specifically, this part will elaborate the findings with theoretical background and previous studies.

First, the use of peer assessment is effective in developing students’ writing of recount text. This is shown through the increasing of post-test average scores after the students tried to apply peer assessment in their writing activity. It means that students accepted the use of peer assessment and they could feel the significant change in their writing after using it. The advantages of using peer assessment were mentioned by Topping (1998) that the potential advantages of peer tutoring are including the development of the skills of evaluating and justifying, and using discipline knowledge. Students can also help each other make sense of the gaps in their learning and understanding and get a more sophisticated grasp of the learning process. Students who receive feedback from their peers can get a wider range of ideas about their work to promote development and improvement. The result also gives the new concept of a research design on the use of peer assessment in developing students’ writing skill, it is different with the previous studies discussed before on chapter two. The research subject and the data collection technique are two previous study employed the case study research design and creative writing course which are totally different with this study which employed pre-experimental design, the research subject and data collection techniques are also different with this study. However, from some differences with the previous studies, the results of each study agree that peer assessment is effective in improving students’ writing skills.

Second, the students give the positive responses on the use of peer assessment in developing their writing of recount text. It can be seen from the percentage result; it is about 10% students strongly agreed and 87% of students agreed with the use of peer assessment. The rest of the data shows that 3% of students are neutral for the use of peer assessment in the classroom. It means that teachers can use peer assessment in
the teaching program and make peer assessment as a routine activity to build up students’ responsibility and confidence. However, it was still found that some students did not respond positively on the use of peer assessment. Therefore, it is necessary to do further investigation depth about the effectiveness of peer assessment.

However, it needs some improvements to make all of the students feeling comfortable using this method and to make the results are all in the positive respond.

From those two points above, it can be seen that the use of peer assessment in developing students’ writing of recount text is very effective to achieve the target of a teaching learning process especially in writing, even it still needs some improvements.

CONCLUSIONS
This study is aimed at examining the effectiveness of peer assessment in developing students’ writing of recount text and to find out whether or not students’ give positive responses on it. It was conducted in a pre-experimental design using the quantitative methods. Moreover, the participants in this study were 32 students in a second grade class in one of public senior high schools in Garut. The students were asked to do pre-test and post-test and answered the close-ended questionnaire.

In line with the purposes of the study above, there are two main conclusions and some additional conclusions. The two conclusions are presented based on the research questions which are about the effectiveness of peer assessment in developing students’ writing of recount text and students’ responses on the use of peer assessment. Meanwhile, additional conclusions deal with how peer assessment developed students’ writing of recount text.

The first conclusion is that peer assessment is effective to be applied in developing the students’ writing of recount text. This conclusion results from the statistical calculation using dependent t-test that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test scores. This result reflects that peer assessment has been able to develop the students’ writing of recount text.

The second conclusion is that the students highly give positive responses on the use of peer assessment in their writing activity. The students could feel their improvements after using peer assessment, because they were able to organize the text using appropriate generic structure, linguistic features, and minimized their mistakes they had been done at the pre-test.

As additional conclusions, this study reveals that using peer assessment in teaching program could minimize the students’ errors, especially in writing activity.

References


