

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction of the study. First, this chapter discusses about the background of the study that explored the general information and the reason the researcher chose this topic. Moreover, several issues related to this topic and specific problem are presented. This part also explains the research questions related to this topic, the purpose of the that highlighted the aim of this study, and the significance of the study for several parties. Last but not least, the organization of the chapters is also presented in this chapter.

Background of the Study

In learning English, there are several important skills that should be mastered by students. The skills are divided into two forms namely receptive skill of listening and reading and productive skill of speaking and writing. According to Nan (2018), the four language skills are related and cannot be separated. In real life, these four skills can influence each other. For instance, in writing activity, we sometime confirm the writing by reading; and while reading, we may also listen and say what we read.

Ideally, students are able to be experts in these skills; however, in reality, a large number of students face difficulty in writing skills. Writing has become one of the skills that can be perceived as the result of learning English. In the process of writing, feedback is an attempt to correct an error in acquiring knowledge. According to Bijami et al. (2013), feedback is used to give knowledge to students

by giving direction to the knowledge they already know. The most important factor in providing feedback is to help students by giving comments that can improve their ability (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

There are various types of feedback usually used in learning, namely teacher feedback, peer feedback, and conference. The feedback given can affect the student whether is good or bad (Bijami et al., 2013). For years, feedback has always been done by teachers to support students showing conviction in their skills. In addition, nowadays, types of feedback can be combined with other type, such as peer feedback (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Moreover, feedback provided by other students is generally called peer feedback.

The existence of the Covid-19 pandemic has caused a major change in human life (Olagbaju et al., 2020) including the teaching and learning process. Most teaching and learning processes in Indonesia were conducted with offline meetings, in which teachers and students directly meet in the classroom. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers and students' face-to-face meetings are now limited. The government provides policies that all students are required to study at home and all meetings to be hold online. Consequently, various learning plans did not reach their target in this time of pandemic resulting in both teachers and students struggling to continue the learning process. One of the private universities in Yogyakarta also has been conducting online learning and teaching. This university has been implementing synchronous and asynchronous learning. In one of the courses of the English Language Education Department, there is asynchronous activities namely peer feedback. In offline meetings, the peer

feedback were given by meeting face-to-face in a discussion; however, in the pandemic, the students could only discuss online. This led to several potential problems because new students did not possess experiences in peer feedback and were not used to use application or tools such as reviewing comments.

From the context, the researcher was interested to conduct this research. In fact, there were several studies that have discussed peer feedback. However, this present study was different because the researcher raised the theme of students' views of peer feedback in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of peer feedback in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. The change of the learning process in the Covid-19 era had severely affected students in learning. The learning activities carried out by students were different because of the pandemic. Most students studied in online meetings which limited their social interaction during the learning process. This study also discussed the implementation of peer feedback during the pandemic. The different conditions make the process and procedure for doing feedback differently. There were several things to consider before doing peer feedback online. Therefore, the researcher conducted a study entitled "An Investigation on Students' Attitudes toward Peer Feedback for Writing Assignment in the Pandemic Era".

Identification of the Problem

Under normal circumstances, several students thought that the implementation of peer feedback was ineffective because they showed negative attitude towards peer feedback. Students assumed their English skills to be poor; thus, they could not provide assistance on their friend's existing problems on

assignment. The comments given by students were also too general and did not clearly show the location of the error. In addition, students also felt biased towards comments given by friends because they underestimated their friends' comments quality.

Furthermore, in the Covid-19 situation, the difficulties faced by students were perceived as more complicated. At times, students were unfamiliar with technology which demanded them to adapt and learn on how to use technology. Internet connection was also perceived as the most frequently encountered difficulty because in the process of online learning, the internet was required to access the learning. In addition, Moodle was one of the learning platform used for the implementation of online peer feedback. The activity carried out by the students was in a one-way communication where students read the comments and then revise them without any online discussion to provide a more detailed explanation of the feedback given.

Delimitation of the Problems

Based on the explanation on the previous section, this study only focused on the implementation of feedback in the pandemic era. The research used mixed methods design to conduct a complete and in-depth study. Participants of this study were students in batch 2019 of the English Language Education Department at a private university in Yogyakarta. The research about students' attitudes toward peer feedback in the pandemic era was conducted by investigating the course of Language Learning and Acquisition because this course required students to finish an assignment of writing an essay and doing peer feedback. In

addition, the researcher also wanted to investigate the implementation of peer feedback in the pandemic era.

Research Questions

The research questions being investigated in this research are:

1. How are the students' attitudes toward peer feedback for their writing assignment in the pandemic era?
2. How is the implementation of peer feedback in the pandemic era?

Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions, the objectives of this research can be framed as follows:

1. To find out the students' attitudes toward peer feedback in writing assignment in the pandemic era.
2. To explore the implementation of peer feedback in the pandemic era.

Significances of the Study

This study is expected to be useful for several parties such as the researcher, students, lecturers, and institution. The explanations are presented below:

The Students

This study is expected to make students understand the purpose of implementing peer feedback in writing classes. This study can also help students

improve their motivation in peer feedback activity. In addition, students is also expected to change their attitudes toward peer feedback, especially on writing.

The Lecturers

The lecturers are expected to recognize the importance of implementing peer feedback in writing classes. This study can also help lecturers to recognize students' attitudes towards peer feedback. In addition, lecturers will also find out the ways to implement peer feedback in pandemic era.

The Institution

This study is expected to motivate the institution to facilitate peer feedback by providing features or policies in writing class to implement peer feedback for students before submitting the final project. In addition, the institution can conduct peer feedback training to produce students and teachers to be proficient reviewers.

The Researcher

This study is expected to provide benefits for other researchers who want to explore peer feedback. This study can also help other researchers to add new information. In addition, through this research, other researchers are expected to use it as a reference.

Organization of the Chapters

This research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter discusses the introduction which consists of the background of the study, identification of the problem, delimitation of the problem, research questions, purposes of the study,

and significances of the research. The second chapter discusses literature reviews related to the peer feedback, the implementation of peer feedback, the students' attitude toward peer feedback, the positive and negatives impacts of peer feedback, the teaching and learning process in the pandemic era, and reviews on previous study. The third chapter presents the research methodology which consists of the research design, research setting, research participants, instruments of the study validity and reliability, data collection technique, and data analysis. Additionally, the fourth chapter discusses the findings and discussion of the research. The last chapter discusses about the conclusion and recommendation.