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# The Structure of Peer-Feedback: A Proposal to a Systematic Peer-Feedback Implementation

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Zainurrahman\*

\*STKIP Kie Raha Ternate, English Education Program  
Correspondence: zainurrahmankalero@gmail.com

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## Abstract

This article aims to propose an overview of structured peer-feedback applications. Even though peer-feedback is no longer a new thing in the world of teaching writing, until now there are still many researchers who are interested in studying it, and not a few teachers are still using it. Research that has been conducted to test the effectiveness of peer-feedback and student responses to peer-feedback activities still shows different results. One thing that needs to be considered important is that differences in the results of peer-feedback use and research may result from the unstructured application of peer-feedback. Experts have indicated that peer-feedback can be applied flexibly. They imply that peer-feedback activity should not be restrained in a rigid system. However, research suggests that without careful preparation, peer-feedback activity is unlikely to produce satisfactory results. For a peer-feedback activity to be prepared, special stages in implementing peer-feedback cannot be avoided. Meanwhile, we are faced with the fact that until now no system regulates the peer-feedback structure. It is for this reason that this article was written. Using literature research, this article provides a peer-feedback structure worthy of attention.

**Keywords:** *peer-feedback, types of peer-feedback, how to implement peer-feedback, the structure of peer-feedback, systematic peer-feedback*

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## 1. Background

This article aims to discuss systems for implementing peer-feedback in writing classrooms where English is treated as a second language or foreign language. Designed as library research, this article has gone through various stages of obtaining relevant texts, synthesizing the contents of the text, to answer formulated research questions.

The main reason this article is significant is that it cannot be denied that until recently peer-feedback was implemented as an unstructured activity. It makes sense that soliciting and providing feedback and comments is a simple process as simple as a conversation. Although not for this reason, Williams (2005, p.93) seems to allow us to conduct peer-feedback activities in an unstructured and flexible manner even though she mentions that the success of

peer-feedback lies in the preparation stage; such statements indicate the need to establish a peer-feedback structure or system.

Peer-feedback is certainly not a new trend at this time. In addition to peer-feedback that has been discussed in various literature for a long period such as Spear (1988), Williams (2005), and Hyland & Hyland (2006), peer-feedback is still an interesting issue to be investigated today, for example, Ion, Barrera-Corominas & Tomas-Folch (2016), Tehrani (2018), Zulkarnaen, Rozimela & Saun (2018), Kusumaningrum et al (2019), Chekol (2020), Pham, et al (2020), Lim & Renandya (2020) and of course there are many more.

While many teachers enthusiastically apply peer-feedback in their classrooms as well as researchers who are very interested in it, peer-feedback is still enforced without a system or standard structure. Various literature that discusses peer-feedback clearly explains the reasons that can support the successful implementation of peer-feedback as well as the reasons that make peer-feedback get an unpleasant impression (Hong, 2006). They also explain the advantages and disadvantages of peer-feedback complete with ways to anticipate these drawbacks (Williams, 2005; Spear, 1988). Teachers who use existing literature as a practical basis then apply peer-feedback as a "sharing of writings and comments." It is not surprising that different studies on the use of peer-feedback, particularly in the EFL/ESL writing classroom yield different and even contradictory conclusions (see Hong, 2006 & Zainurrahman, 2010 for comparison).

Observing the enthusiasm of teachers and researchers to use and study peer-feedback intensively, especially in the writing class to date, peer-feedback should be standardized in a system so that the success rate of implementing peer-feedback can be measured and, if possible, developed in the future.

A study done by Kusumawati et al (2019) can be considered the most recent research that enthusiastically initiates two types of peer-feedback that they have tested in their participants' classrooms. Their efforts in categorizing peer-feedback into two types (in-class and in-small-group peer-feedback) are truly worthy of appreciation. However, the synthesis and comparisons between their published research report and the existing relevant literature indicate that the system they are working on needs to be reconsidered. In another section of this article, some important issues related to their peer-feedback system are discussed.

Based on the description of the purpose of this article above, the research questions in this article can be formulated as follows:

- 1.1. What is the status of peer-feedback among other types of feedback in EFL/ESL writing instructions?
- 1.2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of peer-feedback?
- 1.3. What are the stages that must be taken in implementing peer-feedback?
- 1.4. What types of peer-feedback available currently?
- 1.5. How to implement peer-feedback effectively in EFL/ESL writing instruction?

The questions above are the core of the discussion in this article. By addressing some ideas to answer these questions, we hope that we can get a glimmer of light so that we can apply peer-feedback in a systematic and measured manner. Of course, the contents of this article are open to criticism and constructive comments in the future.



## 2. Methods

This study was designed as library research based on Thomas (2005). The stages carried out in this study include:

- Topic selection;
- Research question formulation;
- Keyword searching;
- Source searching;
- Source evaluation;
- Thought organization;
- Presentation;
- Bibliography

The main sources of this research are textbooks that specifically discuss writing instructions and peer-feedback as well as relevant and up-to-date research articles. Dictionaries and encyclopedias have also been used to provide basic ideas and definitions of terms. Source search is carried out through physical libraries and electronic libraries.

By applying content analysis, the text content of the collected sources is then compared and synthesized to get a big picture of the subject matter which leads us to the answers to the research questions that have been formulated.

The discussion is displayed sequentially according to the order of the research questions. The research questions were arranged based on the theme and continuity of the ideas contained in each question. Thus, the linearity of the ideas contained in the discussion section can provide us with the opportunity to conclude in a structured manner even though recursive interconnections in the discussion cannot be avoided.

## 3. Discussion

### ***3.1. What is the status of peer-feedback among other types of feedback in EFL/ESL writing instructions?***

Writing, especially in ESL/EFL classrooms, can be considered the most complex language skill among other language skills (Zainurrahman, 2011; Kusumaningrum et al., 2019). As a productive language skill, when compared to speaking skills which are also productive, writing is a skill that cannot be possessed naturally but through intense practice and continuous experience. Perhaps, that is one of the many reasons why writing skills and text quality continue to receive the attention of researchers to this day.

Particularly in various countries that treat English as a foreign language, writing skills are still an important issue that academics pay attention to. Because English is not used in daily communication both orally and in writing, various techniques and methods are deployed in classrooms to support learning and mastery of these skills (Fatimah & Masduqi, 2017). Besides, researchers are also actively studying these methods and techniques to reveal weaknesses and suggest crucial steps to anticipate these weaknesses in future applications.

Several approaches are usually used in learning writing in EFL classrooms. To date, teachers have familiarized themselves with at least three writing approaches: the product approach, the process approach, and the genre approach (Zainurrahman, 2011; Williams, 2005; Hyland &



Hyland, 2006). Each approach has a different scheme but the process approach is generally used in classrooms because this approach emphasizes aspects of the process as a writer does in real writing activities (Zemach & Rumisek, 2005, p.3; Montague, 1995, p.15). The process approach has been considered as a standard approach that is applied in many countries (Patthey-Chaves, Matsumura & Valdes, 2004).

The process approach in writing is very important because through this approach students are introduced to real writing activities. Many students (if not all) consider writing activities in the classroom a mere formality (only to fulfill the demands of the subject). With a process approach, students are expected to be able to apply the stages of writing carried out by real writers, both fiction and non-fiction writers. These stages include the pre-writing, writing, and post-writing stages (Clark, 2003; Harmer, 2007).

At first glance, the process approach looks simple because there are only three stages in it (experts have different terms for each stage), even though this approach is a complex approach because writing is not only seen as a language activity (or using language) but also involves cognitive activity (Patthey-Chaves, Matsumura & Valdes, 2004) such as building ideas, developing them, and writing them in a structure that can be followed by readers so that understanding of the writing can be guaranteed (Singh & De Sarkar, 1994; Zainurrahman, 2011). Moreover, these seemed-simple stages are not usually done linearly but recursively (Harmer, 2007, p.5; Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p.11).

One of the most important stages in writing with a process approach is the post-writing stage (another term for that stage is the revision or rewriting stage). In this stage, student writers get the opportunity to improve the quality of their text by: correcting grammatical errors and punctuation, developing ideas, improving the organization of their ideas, and making various advances that are considered important for the quality of their text. It is at this stage that students need "help" or feedback, either from themselves (self-feedback), from their teacher (teacher-feedback), or their friends (peer-feedback). Feedback from various sources is needed because many student writers are not aware of the existence of their mistakes either because they did not pay attention or because they did not know that it was an error. By getting feedback, they can improve their writing skills, think critically, and accelerate deep learning (Pham et al, 2020).

Up to this point, we have found the position of feedback in the writing process especially using a process approach. The main question is: what is the status of peer-feedback among other types of feedback available. To find the answer, we need to briefly review the strengths and weaknesses of each type of feedback and see what types of feedback are most likely to be applied in an EFL/ESL writing classroom. Thus, we can assign a certain status to peer-feedback among other types of feedback.

Self-feedback is probably the most common source of feedback used by real writers. Naturally, we often double-check what we've written and hope that we can find some mistakes to fix. With these improvements, we also hope that our writing can be accepted or at least considered by a publisher. Unfortunately, not many students in the writing class have similar habits because the motives on which their writing activities are based are different from those of real writers. Students also may not think that the activities they do in the writing classroom are "writing exercises" but only meet the demands of the course. Furthermore, students tend to think that having good writing skills is only important to



writers (as a profession). By having different dreams in their minds, writing skills are considered unimportant to them. That is why students rarely proofread their writing before they submit it to the teacher unless the teacher gives clear instructions to reread their writing, find mistakes, and revise.

To apply self-feedback, students must be guided by the teacher. Teachers need to take the time to teach students the editing procedures and be willing to accompany them to practice. If the teacher only gives instructions to read again and find mistakes to correct, students will likely fail to take advantage of self-feedback because students often face difficulty finding their own mistakes (Williams, 2005, p.162).

In the revision stage (if the teacher applies a process approach) students can of course find errors in their text such as surface errors such as incorrect tense usage and typos. They made this mistake on the first draft; they may not have noticed these mistakes when writing their first draft. Other things such as organization and idea development are very unlikely to be done by students if they read their own writing unless they are really trained to have a "writer mentality" and that is not a trivial job.

One of the advantages of self-feedback is that each student only needs to pay attention to their work. In addition, they can be called the people who know their writing best so they understand exactly what they have to do to make their writing truly legible. The problem is, not all students know how to do it. Furthermore, they may have many assignments assigned by teachers of other courses, and revising their writing may be a time-consuming task. Because they have to figure out for themselves what to do (and how to do it) to develop their text, coupled with the piling up of other teachers' assignments, their cognitive load increases, and as an escape, they end up not being serious about their own text. Without intending to describe students as closed-minded, the shortcut they would usually take is to conclude that their text is perfect. This statement is not unfounded. The students felt that their text did not need to be developed because the remnants of the ideas they had not written (which they should have written) were still clear in their memory so that gaps in ideas in their text could not be detected by them. They experience this because generally, self-feedback gives the impression of "reading as a writer" and not "reading as a reader".

Self-feedback should not be of no potential because, in addition to the teacher being able to train students to correct their writing, the teacher can also provide a revision checklist to use. Furthermore, the teacher should advise against reading the text on the same day that the text was written. By taking a temporal distance with the text for some time, students can have the feeling as if they are reading someone else's text (Manser, 2006).

However, what can be achieved through a revision checklist if the student does not know that there is an error or weakness in his writing? Furthermore, can students get other perspectives that might be useful for their own writing if the writing is only read by them themselves? Nowadays, various kinds of programs are available to help students (or writers) in doing self-feedback or more precisely self-correction. Microsoft Word has a grammar and spelling error checking feature, Grammarly was also built to help student writers to correct grammar mistakes. However, this technology cannot be accessed by all students because most students do not have devices such as laptops or internet networks. And, although these programs can help students to correct grammatical errors in their texts (which are written in English), these programs do not help students to understand their mistakes and also do not cultivate the





writer mentality in students. Finally, students leave the matter of feedback to the teacher because for them the teacher is the person who knows better about the mistakes that exist in their writing and can explain to them about these mistakes and how to correct them.

We cannot imagine EFL/ESL learning without teacher feedback. Almost all student work ultimately has to be submitted to the teacher for assessment and ranking. Teacher-feedback also applies to all subjects because the teacher, apart from being a facilitator, is also the main source of information in classroom discourse.

Especially in the writing classroom (EFL / ESL), Williams (2005) states that most students prefer to get feedback from the teacher rather than self-feedback and peer-feedback. Meanwhile, in the discussion at the ResearchGate forum, many teachers (and researchers) stated that the teacher-feedback is as important as peer-feedback and self-feedback.

Jessica Williams explained that teacher-feedback is really needed by students, especially in the process of writing initial drafts; she also mentioned that if the teacher provides feedback on the final draft, it is highly likely that the students will not follow up on the feedback. In addition, the teacher must provide feedback comprehensively covering the form and content of the student's text which in Clark (2003) are called *global* and *local* categories. Comments should be written in detail so students really know what to do with them. Many teachers only give certain signs (such as crosses, circles, and underscores) in certain parts of the student text without any details so that students do not understand the meaning of these signs. This matter was strongly opposed by Williams because, in the end, the students could not make improvements to the text they wrote.

Teacher feedback, according to Rismawati (2018), can be given both orally and in writing. This feedback can also be given either directly (for example: use was because this is a past tense sentence!) Or indirectly (for example: consider using was). Teachers can also organize some sort of teacher-student conference to discuss common mistakes found in their writing. Teachers can also provide feedback collectively or individually as needed.

Although there are some issues in the teacher-feedback procedure discussed in Williams (2005) and Spear (1988) that are not detailed in this article, they can be well addressed by following some of the strategic steps suggested in the literature. The only issue that cannot be avoided in teacher-feedback is the issue of the number of students in the classroom. Teacher-feedback is certainly very effective if a teacher is only burdened with mentoring only a few students on a scheduled basis (such as a dissertation writer being supervised by a supervisor), but teacher-feedback often tells us a different story when a teacher has to face 20 students in her class. The greater the number of students in the class, the more overwhelmed the teacher will be; especially if we refer to the statement that the teacher must provide detailed feedback and comments for each student's text.

In both schools and universities, the number of students in one class ranges from 15-20 students (even more). In addition, a teacher is usually assigned to teach more than one subject. Thus, only by relying on teacher-feedback in the classroom, teachers are not only overwhelmed in reading and commenting on students' texts, but students will also not get significant feedback and comments (the teacher will only provide detailed feedback on a few texts) and ultimately will not have a significant impact on the development of their text. In this situation, teacher-feedback becomes impractical (Zainurrahman, 2011, p.10;



Kusumaningrum, et al, 2019) and peer-feedback is then considered as an alternative or complementary step to improve the quality of students' texts.

Peer-feedback has long been known as an activity where students share their texts with their peers in the hope of getting constructive input for the development of their texts. Hyland & Hyland (2006, p.6) mentions that peer-feedback (they used *peer review*) can be seen as a formative developmental process that gives writers the opportunities to discuss their texts and discovers others' interpretations of them. It has also been believed that peer-feedback enables students to improve writing capabilities and efficacies, express critical thoughts, reflect upon and build up knowledge, and accelerate deeper learning (Tian & Li, in Pham et al, 2020). Research demonstrates the high level of satisfaction of both teachers and students with peer-feedback. They agreed that peer-feedback helps students to better learn and develop their competencies. Also, it helps them to get engaged with the learning process and to increase their self-regulation abilities (Ion, Barera-Corominas, and Tomas-Folch, 2016, p.9). Moreover, peer-feedback is not only applicable to improve the students' writing skills. Research suggests that students' speaking also improves through peer-feedback (Chekol, 2020).

There have been many studies on the effectiveness of peer-feedback. However, peer-feedback also has a number of drawbacks that need to be anticipated. We postpone discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of peer-feedback in the following section.

So far, we have seen that self-feedback and teacher-feedback face several issues that cannot be avoided or anticipated (for example: limited perspective, unidentified mistakes, and the number of students in the class, etc.). Peer-feedback then can be considered as both an alternative and complementary technique by the teacher. Anyone, of course, can doubt peer-feedback on the grounds that students who are not necessarily competent are unlikely to be able to provide significant feedback. Elsewhere in this article, we will see that even the most incompetent student in the classroom can make a positive contribution to the development of their peer writing.

### ***3.2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of peer-feedback?***

Peer-feedback, like any other type of feedback, has a number of advantages and disadvantages.

According to Williams (2005), through peer-feedback, student writers can experience "their text is read by an authentic reader." In addition, each student can get feedback from more than one source; compare with teacher-feedback and self-feedback which only let students get feedback from one source only.

Peer-feedback also provides feedback at several levels. Student responders may be able to focus on what the teacher missed (or the teacher purposely did not focus on certain categories in the student text). For example, teachers may decide to focus on global issues while students may focus on local issues. Peer-feedback also provides a collaborative and low-risk learning environment; although some studies suggest that differences in cultural backgrounds can affect the learning environment with peer-feedback. Carson & Nelson (in Hyland & Hyland, 2006) state that students from different cultures may have different expectations about fundamental aspects of the group situation, such as the roles of the members, the mechanics of the group, and interpersonal interaction strategies.



Williams also mentioned that students became more active in the writing process because they could also read and discuss with their peers. Their critical reading skills also improve as they are trained to "spot weaknesses" in the writing of their peers. With the writing, reading, listening, and speaking processes, peer-feedback interaction encourages the ability of all L2 skills.

William wrapped up the discussion about the advantages of peer-feedback by mentioning that peer-feedback can allow teachers to check student work individually, hold mini-conferences with other students, or read (and respond to) student comments. In addition, peer-feedback can also strengthen social bonds between students in the classroom. Peer-feedback provides for collaborative interaction and learning so that communication between students can occur.

When it comes to the weaknesses of peer-feedback, Williams mentioned that peer-feedback will only work well if the students' L2 skills are sufficient because otherwise, they cannot provide significant feedback. After all, even understanding their friends' texts has difficulty. Even if they try to provide feedback, they may give feedback that is unclear and even wrong. Hyland & Hyland (2006, p.7) also mention that students might also have difficulties identifying problem areas in other students' writing and offer them inaccurate or misleading advice.

Students may also lack trust, either in themselves or in their friends; they don't believe they (or their friends) can provide important feedback for the progress of their text. With this lack of trust, they may hesitate in giving comments and therefore they become uncritical and only give positive comments such as praise rather than criticism. Students who lack trust in their peers, as Hyland & Hyland (2006) point out, may react negatively and defensively to critical comments from their peers (p.7). It is also stated by Spear (1988, p.24) that the students want help and advice but they don't want to look foolish. They feel at home with peers but often admit that they doubt their peers' ability to help with revisions. Moreover, the students tend to choose the safer option of keeping the discussion primarily non-critical.

When students are grouped into small groups, the group dynamics may become unproductive especially when one of the students in the group becomes aggressive or domineering from the other students. A distraction like this can cause other students to withdraw from the group. As mentioned previously, students from different cultural backgrounds may have different expectations of how a group should work. It can be difficult for multicultural groups to reach a consensus about what to focus on and how to convey information and may affect the extent to which students incorporate their peers' suggestions (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p.8).

Students who are not properly trained (or not given a prior understanding of peer-feedback) will think that this activity is a waste of time, especially if the teacher does not properly prepare students for the activity.

By looking at the advantages and disadvantages of peer-feedback as stated by Williams (2005), we can conclude that the advantage of peer-feedback lies in the aspect of improving L2 competence and skills. Meanwhile, the weakness of peer-feedback lies in the social and psychological aspects. The only serious issue with peer-feedback weakness is the inadequacy of students' L2 competencies and class preparation for peer-feedback activities. Williams states that the weaknesses of peer feedback can be addressed through careful preparation and selective use of peer response activities (2005, p.96). This is in line with Hyland & Hyland (2006, pp.6-7) that an important factor in the success of peer-feedback seems to be students'





training, with instruction encouraging a greater level of engagement with the task and more helpful and concrete advice. They also mention that some problems with peer-feedback are specific to the L2 situation. It is suggested that inexperienced L2 students may find it hard to judge the validity of their peers' comments. Therefore, the classroom (or students) needs to be prepared by the teacher long before the peer-feedback activities take place. The preparation needs to cover the students' L2 competencies, especially grammar which is actually the responsibility of teachers who teach grammar, and the dynamics of peer-feedback. Spear (1988, p.17) suggests teaching students to brainstorm ideas, and prepare questions and devise checklists to guide their revising and editing. Of course, providing an explanation of the importance of mutual trust and being open-minded will facilitate the smooth running of peer-feedback activities in the classroom. Without this explanation, students will not realize that interactions in the classroom can support the development of their L2 skills and competencies, especially their writing skills.

### ***3.3. What are the stages that must be taken in implementing peer-feedback?***

Taking into account the discussion in the previous points, there is no doubt that peer-feedback must be carried out in certain stages. These stages not only serve as a guide for structured peer-feedback implementation but also to suppress weaknesses that might arise as a result of poorly structured peer-feedback implementation.

Peer-feedback is generally known by other terms such as peer response, peer review, and peer correction. These terms are used in many different pieces of literature and systems and we should not be confused by these terms. In the division of stages in this section, different terms are often used but readers are expected to be at their discretion to see these terms refer to the same thing.

Peer-feedback in this article is specifically in the context of classrooms. Based on this, it is very important to note that although peer-feedback activities specifically require students to be proactive in the learning process of writing, it does not mean that the teacher does not have any assignments in the process. The teacher is the guide, facilitator, and mediator who ensure that the peer-feedback process runs well. If teachers do not involve themselves directly in peer-feedback activities, students will see peer-feedback as an activity that is not integrated with learning to write (Williams, 2005, p.96).

The implementation of peer-feedback must be divided into at least three stages: pre-peer feedback, while-peer feedback, and post-peer feedback (Zainurrahman, 2010, 2011). Previously, the peer-feedback stage was only formulated for the physical classroom context. Currently, we can develop these stages so that they can be used in the context of virtual classrooms, which Pham et al (2020) call electronic peer feedback (ePF), or in Hyland & Hyland (2006, p.8) is called computer-mediated feedback.

#### ***3.3.1. Pre-Peer Feedback Stage***

In this stage, both the teacher and students make preparations to enter the peer-feedback activity. Here are some important points to remember in this stage:

- Williams (2005) states that the students must be shown how to respond effectively. In addition, they must understand the goals and potential benefits they can get through



this process (p. 96). It is also very important to make an agreement with the students about the *marks* and their meaning.

- The teacher needs to provide some examples of essays that have been commented on by others so that students know exactly what they should look for in their peer writing.
- At this stage, the teacher also needs to distribute a kind of revision checklist that can be used by students as a guide for "finding mistakes and weaknesses" in their students' writing. Manser (2006) provides an example of a fairly comprehensive revision checklist which includes checking the form and content of the text.
- Teachers also need to provide students with an understanding that peer-feedback activities require an open mind so that offense because of criticism is not needed at all in peer-feedback activities. In some article management systems such as OJS, we have implemented what is called a blind-peer review in which individual authors and responders do not know each other. This is very important to maintain the objectivity of the assessment. This can be implemented in virtual classrooms but not in physical classrooms. Therefore, the teacher must explain to students that the peer-feedback activity will certainly be enriched by criticism of each student's text so that the mentality of students (as writers) can be awakened.
- When possible, the teacher can provide a certain writing sheet that contains a column for comments in the edge/margin of the sheet because the literature suggests that students find it easier to track the comments or feedback when they are written in the margin of the page than at the end of the page. If the teacher prefers to use computer-mediated feedback, the students can use the comment feature (e.g. Microsoft Word) or commenting in the body of the paragraph by using different colors (e.g. red).
- It is also useful to decide whether to run peer-feedback activities in more than one phase (e.g. in the first phase, the students focus on ideas and in the second phase the students focus on grammar).
- The teacher also has the option of grouping students into small groups of 3-4 students. However, this kind of grouping has the potential to limit students' opportunities for getting feedback. We have to think about the possibility that a student might get more useful feedback from other students who are in a different group. As an alternative step, the teacher can create a rotating group system where after a peer-feedback session is held, students move from one group to another. Thus, student grouping consists of two options: static groups and dynamic groups. If the teacher does not take this option, peer-feedback can be carried out in the whole classroom as described later in another section.

### 3.3.2. *While-Peer Feedback Stage*

After ensuring that all the preparation steps mentioned in the pre-peer feedback stage, students are ready to carry out peer-feedback activities. The steps in this stage are as follows:

- Students prepare texts to share with their friends. The teacher has two choices in this matter. First, students can write the text or essay at home the day before the peer-feedback activity. Second, students can write the text or essay on the same day as the peer-feedback activity.
- The teacher maintains his role as a guide, facilitator, and mediator. The teacher gives a signal to start a peer-feedback activity with a predetermined duration of time. When



the teacher states "start" the students begin circulating their text in a certain way depending on the peer-feedback pattern that was determined in the previous stage.

- Students start the peer-feedback activity by reading their peers' texts. The teacher can assign students to pay attention to global and local categories of text simultaneously (in one reading) or students can focus on the categories sequentially.
- If the teacher chooses a grouping pattern, then students are allowed to discuss with their peers. If the grouping pattern is not selected, then discussions between students will not occur because it can interfere with the focus of other students. If the type of peer-feedback that is done is electronic peer-feedback, then discussions cannot be held effectively because this type of peer-feedback does not allow face-to-face interactions.
- Teachers are strongly discouraged from leaving the classroom during peer-feedback activities. Students may have questions that they should ask the teacher directly if they are not sure what they are thinking. For example, a student thinks that the word used by his friend is wrong but he is not sure about it. To be sure, he can ask his friends but the best option is to ask the teacher. The presence of the teacher in the classroom during these activities is also important to anticipate any "friction" between students caused by criticism or negative feedback given by other students. This risk is very likely to occur when the teacher uses student grouping patterns. Therefore, the teacher must continue to monitor peer-feedback activity until it is finished.
- When the activity time is over for one peer-feedback session, students can write their name in the "respondent name" column unless the type of peer-feedback carried out is the blind or random type. The student text can then be returned to the student writer.
- Student writers can follow up on the feedback they get from their peers on the same day or the next day. In this case, the timing is the basis for the decision. At this point, one peer-feedback session has been completed.

### 3.3.3. *Post-Peer Feedback Stage*

After a while-peer feedback session has been completed, the teacher and students are not allowed to leave the classroom before reflecting on the process that has just been implemented. The following are things that should be reviewed in the post-peer feedback stage:

- Teachers need to ask for student responses in general regarding peer-feedback activities. It is likely that students will convey positive and negative responses and this should be commonplace in the dynamics of the classroom.
- The teacher needs to ask if students want to carry out peer-feedback with a different pattern in the next session.
- The teacher also needs to ask (and this is very important) what difficulties the students faced during the peer-feedback activity.
- The teacher can provide opportunities for students to make suggestions such as adding certain items to the peer-feedback process that they think will help them read or review their peers' texts.
- The teacher also needs to remind students to follow up on feedback or comments from their friends. In the follow-up process, the teacher tells students that they can consult with the teacher when correcting or revising their text either on a scheduled basis or not.



- The teacher then said that after writing the next draft (based on feedback and comments), the next peer-feedback session would be held at the next meeting. At this point, the peer-feedback activity has been completed.

Based on the description of the stages in applying peer-feedback above, we also agree that peer-feedback should be done in a structured manner. Peer-feedback should be seen as an activity that is more than just "writing sharing" but an interactive activity between teachers, student writers, and student responders (Williams uses the term audience) that proactively support each other's development of text and writing skills.

Without careful planning and preparation, peer-feedback will only result in more problems than developments. And because peer-feedback is a well-planned and patterned activity, the following sections will describe each peer-feedback pattern that can be applied.

### ***3.4. What types of peer-feedback are available currently?***

Broadly speaking, peer-feedback can be applied in two ways, namely physically and virtually or electronically. Each method has its own patterns but in some cases, there is similar activity taking place in both physical or paper-based (pPF) and virtual or electronic peer-feedback (ePF). We'll look at the details for each type of peer-feedback in this section.

#### ***3.4.1. Electronic Peer-Feedback (ePF)***

In the current industrial era 4.0, the use of computer and network-based technology is no longer something new in the world of education. Various platforms to support the learning process are available, both free and paid. No exception in the context of writing, students, and teachers can use several text-based programs, both web, and desktop-based, in the learning process of writing. The available programs can also be used to carry out peer-feedback activities. This peer-feedback activity which is carried out electronically is referred to as ePF.

Pham et al (2020) stated that their research led them to the conclusion that ePF can improve students' writing skills. They found that the students' texts, both in global and local features, experienced a significant increase (p.16). They use Google Docs as a medium that mediates students to share writing and provide feedback to each other. Their reasons for choosing Google Docs are because this digital tool facilitates peer editing and allows students to edit their documents simultaneously and receive immediate e-PF (pp.5-6). This feature is needed in virtual peer-feedback applications because it allows two or three student writers to work on one text collaboratively. This means Google Docs can be called the best medium for live peer-feedback.

ePF can also be done using social media such as Facebook or blogs because these web-based programs provide a comment feature that allows communication between writers and readers. Alternatively, students can also send their draft files (Microsoft Word or OpenOffice Word) via email or other delivery media for their peers to read and comment on. After that, student responders can send the file back to the student writers.

The available programs have different features which on the one hand are advantageous and on the other hand, they are not. The following is a list of programs and their features that can be used to implement ePF.



Table 1. List of Programs for ePF

Programs	Live Feedback	Comment	Comment Marker	Collaborative Editing	Work Offline
Blog	Not	Yes	Not	Not	No
Facebook	Yes	Yes	Not	Not	No
Microsoft Word	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes
OpenOffice Word	No	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes
Google Docs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

*Note: \* means that the file can be worked collaboratively if it is uploaded to a server to make it online. Microsoft requires the file to be uploaded to One Drive to make it real-time. If it is not uploaded on the server, the feature will be turned off.*

The table above shows us that each program has advantages and disadvantages. Teachers can choose certain programs according to student conditions. For example, if conditions allow students to work online, then Google Docs is the best choice. However, if students have to do it offline for one reason or another, then Microsoft Word is the best alternative.

ePF can be implemented in three ways. First, both the author's student identity and the respondent's student are listed on the document (open peer review). Second, neither the identity of the author nor the respondent student is stated on the document. Therefore, the student writers do not know who would review their text and the respondent students do not know whose text they are reading; one text is only reviewed by one student (blind peer review). Third, it is the same as the second, but one text is reviewed by more than one respondent student (double-blind peer review). If the teacher wants students to collaborate in real-time, then (double) blind peer review cannot be done because the student's identity will appear in the browser used. It is also applied if the teacher wants students to work offline. (Double) blind peer review is only possible if a special system is used (e.g. OJS). Meanwhile, (double) blind peer review can be applied to pPF.

Facebook and Blog may not be an option in ePF because they do not support important features such as marking and collaborative editing which are critical to successful peer-feedback implementation. In addition, the two programs are not only accessible to students but whoever is connected or can view their homepage. Comments given by other people that are not related to the learning process can certainly interfere with the peer-feedback activity carried out.

Behind the sophistication of technology that promises to be successful in implementing electronic peer-feedback, there are other issues that we must consider. We must realize that writing skills are not only needed by students living in developing countries. Students who are in remote areas where computers and the internet are not available to them also deserve good writing skills. Besides, a classroom should not only consist of students with different L2 abilities but also knowledge of how to use technology. It cannot be denied that although nowadays students no longer perceive computers as something foreign, not all students know how to operate and surf the internet; or worse, many teachers do not have any idea what is being discussed in ePF.





Considering the above issues, what meant by careful preparation by the experts that we have mentioned in the previous section also includes mastery of using computers and the programs we list above.

We cannot deny the fact that ePF is so promising. However, ePF also has several drawbacks. The simplest and most obvious weakness is not the inability of students to operate technology but technology depends on another resource, namely electricity. Any electrical disturbance can inhibit (even stop) ePF activity. So that teachers do not give students reasons not to engage in peer-feedback activities, ePF should be considered a secondary type of peer-feedback. By agreeing to that statement, we also accept that pPF is the primary peer-feedback type.

### 3.4.2. *Paper-Based Peer-Feedback (pPF)*

This type of peer-feedback (pPF) would probably be categorized as a traditional type of peer-feedback when compared to ePF. However, pPF is also perhaps the most available type of peer-feedback that can be applied in a broader context.

pPF can be divided into two broad patterns: The first is group peer-feedback and the second is non-group peer-feedback. In Kusumaningrum et al (2019), the first pattern is referred to as in-class peer-feedback and the second pattern is referred to as small-group peer-feedback. However, the grouping of students actually occurs in in-class peer feedback. They mentioned that five students were assigned as a group of reviewers who review the writings of their peers in the class. This is hard work for the five students, especially if the number of students in the class is large enough. Although they concluded that the two peer-feedback patterns they applied gave satisfactory results, students did not have to be overwhelmed with the work of reviewing a large amount of text in their class. This objection is based on the reason that peer-feedback is not just an activity of reading and commenting on peer-to-peer texts but also involves a fairly critical cognitive process (Williams, 2005; Hyland, 2005; Spear, 1998). If students are burdened with excessive workload, they tend to present feedback that is superficial (local feature); even though these five students are the best in the class.

The second pattern they apply is small-group peer-feedback. In this pattern, small groups of 3 or 4 students are created. Student grouping should not be an issue in peer-feedback activities as long as it is a rotating group where students don't just stay in one group. The weakness of small groupings like this is the limitations of students from getting feedback. Furthermore, variables such as L2 fluency, educational background, writing experience, and group dynamics are also important to note (Williams, 2005, pp.93-94). Small static groupings can result in the withdrawal of certain students especially if a member in the group becomes aggressive or domineering (Williams, 2005, p.95). By using a rotating group pattern, these issues can be anticipated in addition to providing opportunities for students to get feedback from peers who may be in different groups.

#### a. Non-Group Peer-Feedback

Non-group peer-feedback is a peer-feedback activity that is carried out in a class without grouping students. This pattern consists of three sub-patterns, namely single-responders peer-feedback (SRPF), multiple-responder peer-feedback (MRPF), and random-multiple-responders peer-feedback (RMRPF) (comparable to blind and double-blind peer review). These patterns were selected based on the L2 fluency level of the students in the class. SRPF



and MRPF can be used at all levels or levels of L2 proficiency but RMRPF is only used at higher levels.

- SRPF : One text is reviewed by one student and their identity is known.  
 MRPF : One text is reviewed by more than one student (maximum 3) and their identities are known.  
 RMRPF : One text is reviewed by more than one student (maximum 3) and their identities are unknown.

#### How to implement SRPF

- Students take up a circle in the classroom;
- The students prepare the text they write on the sheets that have been given by the teacher;
- The teacher gives the signal to circulating their text from right to left. The teacher can count from one to three and at each count, the students circulate their text;
- After the peer-feedback session is over, the students' texts are returned.

SRPF can be carried out in one meeting ( $\pm 60$  minutes) because each student only needs to review one text at a time. After students have revised their text, the teacher can continue the next session by using the same pattern but the students are required to change their seats. Having this pattern repeated in different meetings, the students will have chances to get more feedback from different peers.

#### How to Implement MRPF

- Each student prepares at least two copies of their text;
- Students stand in a circle;
- The teacher gives two signals (it depends on the number of copies; maximum three) for circulating the student's text. Each signal consists of three counts. On the first signal, at each count, the students circulated the first copy of their text from right to left. On the second signal, at each count, the students circulated a second copy of their text from left to right. If there are three copies, then the teacher should modify the counting (e.g. one to five) so that two similar texts are not reviewed by the same student. The teacher also needs to make sure that a student does not get his own text.
- After the peer-feedback session is over, each text is returned.

MRPF can be applied in one meeting with a duration of  $\pm 120$  minutes. After students have revised their text, the teacher can apply the same pattern to the next meeting (on a different day). As in the SRPF, students are required to change positions.

#### How to Implement RMRPF

- Students prepare at least two copies of their text. Their names may not appear in their text;
- The title of their text has been handed over to the teacher so that the teacher knows the name of the student for each title. This is an important step so that the teacher can return the student's text correctly;
- Students submit their texts to the teacher;



- The teacher's function is to circulate student texts randomly. The teacher needs to ensure that (a) a student gets the same two texts and (b) a student does not get his or her own text;
- Students carry out the peer-feedback activity of the first session for one text;
- The second peer-feedback activity (second text) will be carried out on the next session on a different day if the time allocation for each session is not possible. The teacher must give students pause to rest so that their energy will recover to do a review of the next text;
- Student responder should not write their name on the text;
- After all the texts have been reviewed and commented on, students submit the texts to the teacher;
- The teacher returns the text to the student writer respectively;

Previously, it was stated that RMRPF should be applied only in classes where the students' L2 ability is above average. The reason is that students with L2 abilities above average are more proficient in reviewing so that the review process for one text does not take a long time. RMRPF is quite time-consuming especially when it comes to circulating and returning texts. If RMRPF was implemented in a class where the L2 ability of students was below average, the peer-feedback process could not be completed.

#### b. Group-Peer Feedback

Group peer-feedback consists of two sub-types, namely the static group and the rotating group. The number of students in each group can be adjusted according to the class size. Group members are selected based on their L2 level; the teacher should create heterogeneous groups so that students with higher L2 levels can help students whose L2 levels are still low. Students can do peer-feedback activities in or outside the classroom.

##### Static Group

In static groups, students do not get the opportunity to move from one group to another. The advantage of this type is that students and teachers can track the progress of each student because they are always in the same group consistently. The weakness of this type is the possibility of social irritation between students when one student becomes aggressive and makes the other student offended and eventually withdraws from the group (or is uncomfortable in the group). If students have been given the understanding they need as stated in the pre-peer feedback section, this risk can be avoided. Another weakness is that one student may not be able to get feedback from the other students in the other group.

Teachers need to place students with low L2 level along with students with middle and high L2 levels. This is important so that peer-feedback activity can also mediate peer-learning. If the teacher identifies a tension between student A and student B, then the teacher can separate them by placing them in different groups.

In applying peer-feedback groups, students in a group discuss their texts one by one. Therefore, if a group consists of 3 students, each student must provide three copies of their text. Thus, MRPF also applies to this type.

One group is guided by a moderator whose function is to determine the order of the texts to be reviewed. Meanwhile, the teacher determines the order of the categories or features to be



reviewed (global and local) for each text. Make sure that each student in the group plays the same role, which is to review the text according to the text order and the order of the categories.

If we pay attention, group peer-feedback is not just about sharing writing. The students in the group work together to review a text. This is a collaborative writing pattern that can be compared to live or real-time peer-feedback in ePF. They discuss sentence structure, choice of appropriate words, clarity of meaning and organization of ideas, and so on. They focus on one text at a time; they work with the same text. Teachers can also set a duration for each text (eg 60 minutes: 30 minutes on global features and 30 minutes on local features).

When the peer-feedback session is over, any text can be returned to the individual students.

### Rotating Group

To ensure that each student can get more feedback, in this pattern, students will be transferred from one group to another. If there are students who do not want to change groups, the teacher should not move them. However, the student must be informed that he or she will be with the other students in the group. For that reason, it is likely that the student will change his choice.

To design a group member rotation, the teacher can use the lottery technique. The students are asked to take a lottery and see which group they will occupy. For students who do not want to change groups, they do not have to draw a lottery and some lottery numbers (based on group numbers) are removed from the box.

There is no more difference in activity between the static group and the rotating group. Each group only focuses on one text at a time and each text is reviewed for a certain duration as determined by the teacher. The order of the texts is arranged by a moderator and the order of the categories is determined by the teacher.

When one peer-feedback session has been completed, students can leave the group.

Up to this point, we've looked at several types and patterns of peer-feedback that can be used in an EFL / ESL writing classroom. The type and pattern chosen must of course be adapted to the existing situation and conditions. All of the types and patterns discussed in this article can be considered as a peer-feedback system. Each type and pattern has its own strengths and weaknesses and we need further learning to uncover them. However, in general, several things must be considered so that the type and pattern of peer-feedback implemented can produce the expected results. Some of these important matters have been mentioned earlier and the following sections will summarize our knowledge of them.

### 3.5. *How to implement peer-feedback effectively?*

Williams (2005) has emphasized that the success of a peer-feedback activity really depends on how well the teacher prepares students and himself to implement the activity. Although she indicated that rigid systems and structures are not mandatory for implementing peer-feedback, the preparations he mentioned actually indicated that peer-feedback had to be built on certain stages that allowed preparation and planning. That is why the peer-feedback system currently being initiated consists of pre, while, and post peer-feedback stages. The preparations and planning discussed by Williams above occupy the pre-peer feedback stage.



We all want an effective peer-feedback implementation that produces the desired results. We have been taught that peer-feedback has several social and psychological issues (Spear, 1988; Hyland & Hyland, 2006) and all these issues stem from the unpreparedness of students in carrying out peer-feedback activities (Williams, 2005). Even though students have different backgrounds (social, mental, cultural, educational, and L2 level), by having a correct understanding of the benefits of peer-feedback, these issues can be anticipated early. Here, the teacher acts as a facilitator who facilitates the students' understanding of what they should do and what they should not do or experience during the peer-feedback activity. By providing the students with understanding, it is possible that whole students in the classroom will positively value peer-feedback as found by Ion, Barera-Corominas, and Tomas-Folch (2016, p.5:

Whole participants, both students and teachers have expressed their satisfaction with the experience of peer-feedback and they consider that this has helped them to improve the learning process.

Another issue that makes peer-feedback ineffective is that not all students know how to give feedback. Therefore, teachers need to prepare certain documents such as sheets that have been designed to accommodate student writings and their peer comments. In addition, to guide students in the review process, a revision checklist is certainly very helpful. It is also a requirement to teach the students how to mark or highlight any commented parts; there should be agreements between teacher and students concerning the meaning of any marks.

We have seen that peer-feedback can be done in two ways: electronic and paper-based. For peer-feedback activities to run well, teachers need to choose the type of peer-feedback that best fits the context. If the teacher decides to use ePF, then students must be sure to have knowledge of operating the instruments or media they will use such as computers, the internet, websites, programs, and so on.

During peer-feedback activities, the teacher must not leave the classroom. Teachers must be there to monitor and guide students in these activities. The presence and involvement of teachers in the classroom during peer-feedback activities gives the impression that peer-feedback activities are an integral part of the subject matter.

The teacher also needs to choose the type and pattern of peer-feedback that fits the student's context. That is, the decision to choose a peer-feedback type or pattern must be based on real considerations. The selected type must be applied consistently throughout the lesson (eg one semester). This serves to allow teachers (and students) to measure achievement through the selected type of peer-feedback. In a writing lesson (especially with a process approach), peer-feedback starts from when students write the first draft to the final draft. A theoretical understanding of the good writing process should be given to students in the pre-peer feedback stage. Thus, the delivery of writing theories and rules must be accompanied by theories on peer-feedback. Thus, students become aware that peer-feedback is an important activity in writing.

After the peer-feedback activity is carried out, the teacher and students must reflect on the processes, results, and obstacles faced by students during the application of peer-feedback. This will help teachers and students apply peer-feedback at the next meeting.





Then, finally, the peer-feedback activity must be carried out for several cycles so that students can produce a quality final draft. Singh and De Sarkar (1994, p.23) note that:

Even if in a 16-week semester (with two hours per week for teaching written communication) there is time to write only one full-length essay with a reasonable amount of planning and interactive feedback, students can develop certain cognitive abilities that should help them in their future academic writing assignments.

Peer-feedback cannot be considered as an optional activity to fill certain sessions in the learning schedule. Both teachers and students must be committed to implementing peer-feedback in the classroom until the end of learning so that student outcomes and achievements can truly be measured.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the discussions above, we can draw some conclusions as follows:

In the learning process of writing (EFL / ESL), especially with a process approach, peer-feedback is one of the types of feedback that can be applied in the classroom to support the development of students' writing skills which have an impact on the quality of the text they produce. Peer-feedback has a number of clear reasons for adopting it because of the many positive outcomes it facilitated.

Compared to other types of feedback (self-feedback and teacher-feedback), peer-feedback also has a number of weaknesses that relate to socio-psychological issues. However, with gradual implementation, peer-feedback can provide the expected results.

The stages in implementing peer-feedback consist of pre-peer feedback (including preparation and planning), while-peer feedback (including controlled peer-feedback activities, interactions between students and students and teachers), and post-peer feedback. (including reflection on peer-feedback activities that have been carried out and follow-up plans).

Peer-feedback can be done in at least two ways, namely electronically (electronic peer-feedback) and physically (paper-based peer-feedback). Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages, as well as differences in application. To select one type of peer-feedback to implement, the teacher must consider the context in which it is possible to implement a particular type of peer-feedback as planned and with the expected results. The schemes of peer-feedback can be seen in the appendix section.

To implement peer-feedback effectively, peer-feedback activities must be well planned and prepared. Students must be equipped with a complete understanding of the benefits of peer-feedback and how it is implemented so that weaknesses that have been problems in previous research can be anticipated. Peer-feedback should also be seen as a long-term activity. Peer-feedback must be applied in multiple cycles so that student achievement can be measured.

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