

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Writing is one of the skills that is taught in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from elementary level until university level. The students also learn how to write English to transfer their ideas and thoughts in a better organization in written form than in spoken language. Writing as a complex skill is considered as the most difficult skill from the other skills (listening, speaking, and reading).

Byrne (1984: 18) categorizes three problems why writing is considered as the most difficult skill. The first is psychological problems. There is no physical interaction between a writer and his readers, since writing is one way communication among them. Therefore, the writer can not give feedback to the readers. The second one is linguistic problem. To write something, the writer needs the ability to communicate his ideas into words by choosing the right sentence structure that will be understood well by the readers. The writer should also master the written form of language which are different from spoken language and which is infrequently used in speech. And the last is cognitive problems. Writing is learnt through a process. The writer should have the ability to organize their ideas into pieces of writing. It takes study and practice to develop the skill.

Furthermore, Gebhard (1996: 235) groups the problems in writing faced by both EFL learners and teachers into three. The first problem is teaching the “less-proficient writer”. Some students use ineffective writing strategies, and the teacher is faced by showing these students how to write. The second one is teaching the “I can’t write English”. Some students have negative attitudes about writing or are lack of confidence in themselves as writers. Then the teacher faced how to change their attitudes and build confidence. The third is the “Teacher’s Response” problem. Students do not always understand or pay attention to the content of the teacher’s response to their written work. Thus, teachers need to explore different ways for students to get feedback on their writing.

Dealing with the problem of the teacher’s response above, peer editing can be applied to make students, especially of junior high school level, to produce better writing. By peer editing, the teacher involves the students to do correction, focusing particularly on the content and organization of English composition. The students read one another’s compositions to make suggestions for revision before the teacher grades them (Dixon, 1986: 2). Doing peer editing will be beneficial for both teacher and students. For the teacher, it will help him grade the students’ work, while for the students, it will help them increase their knowledge through editing their friends’ work.

Roni (2001), in his research entitled “Peer Correction as an Alternative Way of Learning Writing at the English Department of State University of Malang”, mentions that the students respond to the feedback from their peers positively, and

they also regard peer correction as advantageous. It means that peer editing can be applied as an alternative way of teaching writing. This finding reinforces the statement that the use of peer correction is important in improving students' writing skill. Hence, both students and lecturers can apply this kind of method to help them create new "atmosphere" of writing activities and improve students writing skill.

According to School Based Curriculum/Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP), the goal of teaching learning English at junior high school is that the students must be able to develop communicative competence in written as well as in spoken to achieve functional literacy level. In this curriculum, the English material is taught based on text. One of the texts that have to be learnt by the second year students of junior high school is descriptive text. The students have to be able to understand and create a descriptive text cohesively based on the social function and generic structure of the text.

Based on the descriptions above and some reasons below, the writer would like to conduct a research concerning on the use of peer editing in learning descriptive text. The first reason, it is because descriptive text is an important text that can be used to describe a particular place, person or thing in daily life. The second one, it is because some previous researchers have proved that the use of peer editing takes an important role in learning writing.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the research background above, the writer formulates the problems as follows:

1. How does the teacher implement peer editing in teaching-learning writing descriptive text to the second grade students of SMP N 3 Pekalongan East Lampung?
2. How is the students' perception about the value of peer editing in writing?

1.3 Objectives

In line with the problems formulated above, this study is aimed at describing the process of peer editing in the writing class. More specifically, it is aimed at giving description of:

1. The process of implementation of peer editing in writing descriptive text to the second grade students of SMP N 3 Pekalongan East Lampung.
2. The students' perception about the value of peer editing in writing.

1.4 Uses

This research aims at having such uses as follows:

Theoretical uses:

- To support the previous study and to be used as a reference for further research.

Practical uses:

- As the information to the reader, especially for English teachers about the importance of peer editing that could be applied as an alternative way in teaching writing. Furthermore, the teachers were expected to involve the students in giving feedback to their peers' writing.
- The finding of this study was also expected to give more ideas to the students to consider editing as an important stage in writing. Furthermore, they would not be afraid of making mistake because by making mistakes they could learn it and try to avoid it next time. Besides, using peer editing would increase the students' competence in writing, because while editing their friends' works, they also learnt new knowledge that probably they did not know before.

1.5 Scope

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Pekalongan. The subjects of this research were the teacher and the second year students in 2011/2012 academic years, class VIII. The students' writing was specified into descriptive text, because descriptive text was stated in School Based Curriculum (KTSP) and it was really important and related to students' daily life. The students would study grammar, vocabulary, and descriptive text by the end of this semester. Feedback and inputs given by the students to one another in this study was in terms of content, organization of their writing, and the use of language. The teacher only focused on some certain aspects as making topic sentence, developing it into a paragraph, and making concluding sentence.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In this research, the writer used some definition of key terms as stated below:

- *Editing* : making a sentence grammatically and mechanically correct (Leki, 1998:154)
- *Peer editing* : having other writer to read and give feedback on what other writer has written (Hayland, 2005)
- *Learning* : a relatively permanent change in behavioral potentiality that occurs as a result of reinforced practice (Hergenhahn and Olson, 1997: 2)
- *Writing* : a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways (Byrne, 1984: 1)
- *Descriptive text* : a text which talks about or describes on a particular person, place, or thing (Nainggolan, 2010:24).
- *Perception* : the process of organizing and interpreting sensory information to give it meaning (Santrock, 2003: 177)