

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended to provide an overview of the study. It contains background, research questions, research objectives, significances of study, rationale, hypothesis, and previous studies.

#### **A. Background**

Writing is one of the most important skills in learning a foreign language (Pasand & Haghi, 2013). Writing is an outlet for emotions and thoughts and it is still as an important component of foreign language learning (Fageeh, 2011). It is an essential and necessary skill for EFL students (Hashemi & Amerian, 2011). Through writing, students can see themselves as sincere, sensible, sensitive, thoughtful beings, capable of penetrating creative self-expression (Engle, 1970).

Writing is considered as the most difficult skill by language learners because they need to have a certain amount of L2 background knowledge of rhetorical organizations, appropriate language use or specific lexicon in which they communicate with their readers (Tangpermpoon, 2008). In English as a foreign language (EFL) writing classrooms, teachers often encounter difficulty in assisting students in learning (Flower, 1994) and also address repetitive grammatical errors (Hinkel, 2003; Milton, 2006). Writing in an EFL context entails the burden of learning to express thoughts while simultaneously learning English. Grammatical errors are unavoidable because

of the cognitive demand of performing both the tasks at the same time (Hyland, 2003).

Based on the preliminary observation, students' difficulties in writing are: In a class, students were hard created a descriptive paragraph and only 14 students who could create it, they were lack of ideas to write, there were only 18 students have scores that passed 75 as Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) for English subject and 12 students did not pass the score of KKM in a half semester, and the learning writing was lack of feedback.

Considering the problems, strengthening feedback is a potential solution. Feedback as all post-response information that is provided to a learner to inform the learner on his or her actual state of learning or performance (Narcis, 2008). Considering the trend of student-centered learning, peer feedback is a good alternative. Peer feedback is 'the learners' use of sources of information and interactions for each other in such a way that learners take on the responsibilities in commenting on each other's drafts in the process of writing (Liu & Hansen, 2002). Peer feedback has been known as a critical technique for improving students' writing all around the world (Maryam et al., 2013). A growing body of research has recommended the use of peer feedback because of its social, cognitive, and affective benefits (Hinkel, 2004; Lundstorm & Baker, 2009; Min, 2008; Pol et al., 2008; Storch, 2004). As a form of collaborative learning, peer feedback can serve as an effective pedagogical activity to improve the teaching and learning of language writing (Min, 2005; Yu & Le, 2015; Zhao, 2014).

The aim of this study is to investigate the effect of peer feedback technique on students' descriptive paragraph. It deals with the enhancement of the writing ability primarily. Particularly, it deals with writing assessment which is students comprehend and have competence in writing text or paragraph. Thus, students have knowledge about the particular aspect that is needed in writing process like grammar and structure. Furthermore, correct cohesion and coherence can be established in writing a text or paragraph.

Peer feedback is not a new term in the EFL study. It has been reported by a lot of studies. In this research, five studies were referred. The first referred study was conducted by Ruegg (2015). He reported that students' who received teacher feedback in writing gained more in grammar scores than peer feedback. However, in the other reports, peer feedback enhanced students' cognitive and social relations. Peer feedback also played as an important part of writing (Bijami et al, 2013). According to Gulsah and Yastibas (2015), peer feedback decreased students' writing anxiety. In the other study, peer feedback practices among students were influenced by students' beliefs and values, students' motives and goals, examination culture, and group dynamics (Yu & Hu, 2017). According to Yu and Lee (2016), students adopted five major strategies in peer feedback: using L1, employing L2 writing criteria (rule of language), seeking help from a teacher, adopting rules of group activity, and playing different roles (as a reader or as a writer).

Furthermore, it is important to investigate more about the effect of peer feedback technique toward writing ability to write a descriptive paragraph of

students Junior High School. Thus, the researcher wants to conduct a research with the title **“Enhancing Students’ Descriptive Paragraph Through Peer Feedback Technique”**.

### **B. The Research Questions**

The following questions are formulated to guide the investigation of research problems, namely:

1. What is the students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph before the implementation of peer feedback technique?
2. What is the students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph after the implementation of peer feedback technique?
3. How significant is the implementation to enhance the students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph using peer feedback technique?

### **C. The Research Objectives**

In line with the research questions, this research aims at the following three objectives:

1. To find out the students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph before the implementation of peer feedback technique.
2. To find out students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph after the implementation of peer feedback technique.
3. To find out the significant implementation to enhance the students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph using peer feedback technique.

#### **D. The Significances of Study**

Theoretically, this study is significant for information that peer feedback technique can be used in writing in order to conduct assessment toward students' writing ability. A substantial number of studies have examined learners' perceptions and psychological or motivational impact or peer feedback, as well as peer feedback, could affect writing and language development (Hyland and Hyland, 2006).

Practically, this study is significant to help a teacher to assess students' writing ability using peer feedback technique as an alternative in teaching model to enhance students' writing ability.

#### **E. Rationale**

Brown (2001) points out that writing is the written products of thinking, drafting, and revising that require specialized skills on how to generate ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use discourse markers and rhetorical conventions coherently into a written text, how to revise text for clearer meaning, how to edit text for appropriate grammar, and how to produce a final product. A good writing will make a reader understand the writer's message.

According to Ann and Alice (2007), the process of writing consists of four steps namely prewriting, organizing, writing, and revising (including editing). In prewriting, a writer assembly and generate ideas. Then, a writer organizes ideas. Further, a writer creates a draft. The Final step, the writer check the draft by editing and revising it. In the process of editing and

revising, peer feedback can be applied as an alternative. Liu and Hansen (2002) defined peer feedback as “the learners” use of sources of information and interaction for each other in such a way that learners take on the responsibilities on commenting on each other’s drafts in the process of writing. Hence, students become more independent in term of upgrading comprehension in learning.

Peer feedback gives a positive contribution to the learning. Damond and Phelps (1989) said that the advantages of peer feedback regarding cognitive benefit in leading students to think than receive feedback from the teacher. Therefore, students give extra efforts in learning and make them independent in term of advance. They comprehend more knowledge because they get the knowledge by themselves with hard efforts. Then, they become aware that the learning and feedback not only focus on the teacher but students can act dominantly in the learning process, especially in the writing classroom. Besides that, peer feedback can contribute to students’ social relations, intellectual improvement, and progress of creative and critical thinking (Damond and Phelps, 1989).

A Descriptive paragraph is used to describe what something looks like (Boardman & Jia, 2002). According to Alice and Ann (2007), descriptive writing appeals to the senses, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and/or sounds. A good description is a word picture; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind.

Furthermore, a paragraph has two parts namely topic sentence and supporting sentences (Alice & Ann, 2007).

To measure students' ability in creating writing descriptive paragraph is needed an assessment. Writing assessment can support teaching, both conceptually and practically (White, 1985). The assessment of writing is central to the process of effective teaching and learning of writing (Jones, 2002). Furthermore, assessment can measure writing development. One of the assessments that is used to measure the enhancing students' descriptive paragraph is writing assessment based on National Curriculum 2013 revision 2017. From the explanation above, this research is intended to present peer feedback that is expected to give an effect on students' writing ability to write a descriptive paragraph. The sample of this research used two kinds of the variables. The first is Peer feedback as the "X" variable, and the second is students' descriptive paragraph as the "Y" Variable.

#### **F. Hypothesis**

A hypothesis is a temporary statement that is still weak, then need to be investigated (Meilia, 2010). The investigation is divided into two variables. The first variable is peer feedback (variable X) and the second variable is students' ability to write a descriptive paragraph (variable Y). The hypothesis in this study is an alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). The relation of the research hypothesis is proposed as

follow: **“Enhancing Students’ Descriptive Paragraph Through Peer Feedback Technique.”**

The formulated hypothesis is described as follows:

**H<sub>a</sub>:** There is a significant difference in students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph after the implementation of peer feedback technique.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no a significant difference in students’ ability to write a descriptive paragraph after the implementation of peer feedback technique.

### **G. Previous Studies**

Peer feedback has been investigated by some researcher. One of the studies was conducted by Yu and Lee (2016), who explored four Chinese EFL learners’ strategies during peer feedback practices. They defined strategy in peer feedback as an action to achieve a task goal. The finding indicated that students adopted five major strategies in peer feedback: using L1, employing L2 writing criteria (rule of language), seeking help from a teacher, adopting rules of group activity, and playing different roles (as a reader or as a writer).

The finding of the journal indicated that there were five major strategies in peer feedback. It could be as a guidance to conduct the research of this paper. The strategies can be applied in the process of revising students’ descriptive text.

Another research conducted by Yu and Hu (2017). This case study examined two Chinese EFL university students' peer feedback practices and



the factors underlying their practices, addressing issues related to both the "what" and "why" of peer feedback in L2. The aim of the study was to examine how individual differences and contextual factors may influence peer feedback practices. The researcher found that peer feedback practices among students were influenced by students' beliefs and values, students' motives and goals, examination culture, and group dynamics.

Relating the finding of the journal, it is needed to consider various contextual influences on peer feedback practices for conducting the research of peer feedback technique to enhance students' ability to write a descriptive paragraph. The researcher of this paper was needed to go beyond the act of feedback itself.

Furthermore, the research about peer feedback conducted by Gulsah and Yastibas (2015). The aim of the study was to investigate the effects of peer feedback on Turkish EFL students' writing anxiety and perceptions towards it. The results divided into two methods that were applied in the research. The qualitative result indicated that the students believed using peer feedback in writing classes decreased their writing anxiety, increased their confidence, and improved their writing by collaborating with and learning from each other. The quantitative results of the study indicated that the use of peer feedback in writing classes reduced students' writing anxiety in terms of cognitive, somatic, and avoidance anxiety.

Based on the findings of the study, peer feedback could decrease students' writing anxiety. The findings were used to support the

investigation of this paper about enhancing students' writing ability to write descriptive paragraph through peer feedback technique.

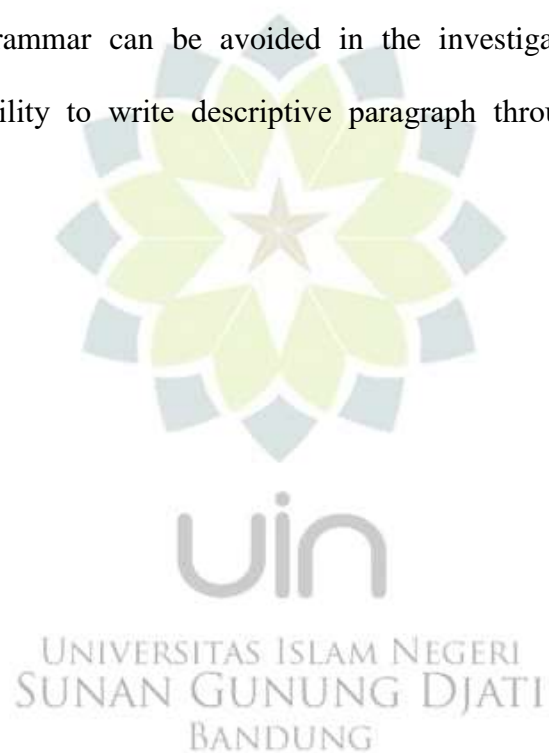
Another research conducted by Bijami et al, (2013). They reported that peer feedback has advantages and disadvantages. Advantages of peer feedback related to an enhancing students' cognitive and social relation. It was noteworthy that peer feedback played an important part in writing instruction. On the contrary, peer feedback was viewed as bias feedback that is associated with friendship. A Teacher was the one who is qualified to provide feedback according to students' assuming. The aim of the study was to briefly summarize some of the main arguments in favor and against the role of peer feedback in learning second language writing.

The findings of the study were used as anticipation for conducting this paper. To conduct research about enhancement students' writing ability to write a descriptive paragraph through peer feedback technique was needed a prior-knowledge about the advantages and disadvantages of peer feedback technique.

Another study on peer feedback was conducted by Ruegg (2015), who explored 51 students of a university. The study investigated the differences in improvement in writing ability that achieved by EFL students who received teacher feedback and peer feedback. The investigation was divided into two groups. One group received teacher feedback while a second group gave and received peer feedback. The findings indicated that

there was no significant difference between gains for content, vocabulary, and total essay score of writing but teacher feedback group gained significantly in grammar scores.

The findings of the study are used for an anticipation of this paper. The researcher of this paper is needed as a key for writing instruction in students' group of peer feedback practices. Hence, inequality of gaining scores in grammar can be avoided in the investigation of enhancing students' ability to write descriptive paragraph through peer feedback technique.





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