# EXPLORING THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE ROLE OF PEER-ASSESSMENT METHOD TO REDUCE ANXIETY IN WRITING CLASSES: A STUDY OF THE SIXTH SEMESTER ENGLISH STUDENTS AT SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

A Thesis by:

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## FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

2024

#### **COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

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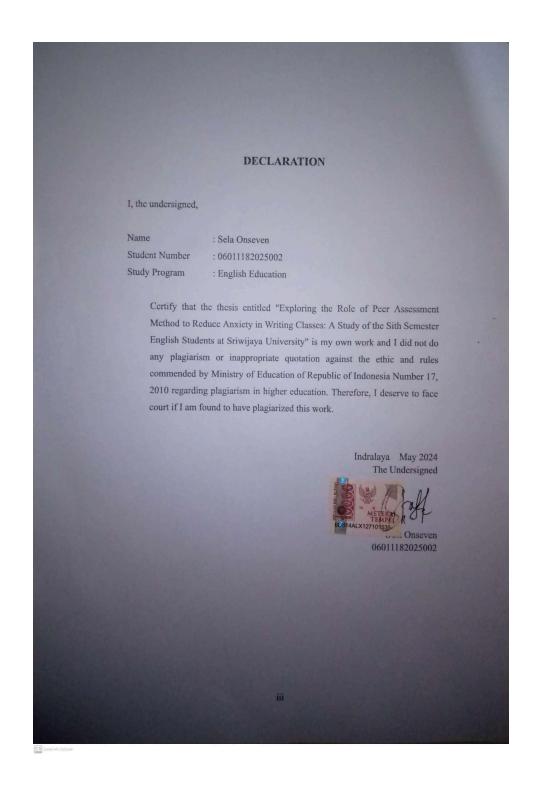
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#### **APPROVAL**

Exploring the Students' Perception on the Role of Peer Assessment Method to Reduce Anxiety in Writing Classes: A Study of the Sixth Semester English Students at Sriwijaya University Sela Onseven Student Number: 06011182025002 This thesis was defended by the writer in the final program examination and was approved the examination committee on: Day: Monday Date: May 20th 2024 1. Chairperson: Prof. Soni Mirizon, M. A., Ed.D (3007)

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#### **DECLARATION**



#### THESIS DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parent and family for their support, their sacrifice and endless love during my lowest time

#### **MOTTO**

"Indeed with hardships; comes ease"

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Indralaya May 2024

The Writer

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vii

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMITTEE APPROVAL	i
APPROVAL	ii
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
MOTTO	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF APPENDICES	xi
LIST OF TABLES	. xii
ABSTRACT	. xiii
CHAPTER I	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 The Problem of the Study	4
1.3 The Objectives of the Study	4
1.4 The Significance of the Study	4
CHAPTER II	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 Perception	6
2.1.1 Students' Perception	7
2.2 Assessment	7
2.3 Peer-Assessment	9
2.4 The Role of Peer-Assessment in Writing Classes	10
2.5 Anxiety in Writing Classes	11
2.5.1 Types of Writing Anxiety	. 13
2.6 Peer Assessment as a Potential	
Anxiety-Reduction Strategy	. 13
2.7 Previous Related Studies	. 15
2.8 Framework of The Study	. 17

CHAPTE	R III	19
метноі	DOLOGY	19
3.1 I	Research Design	19
3.2 (	Operational Definition	20
3.3 \$	Site and Participants of the Study	20
<b>3.4</b> N	Method of Collecting Data	21
3.4.1	1 Questionnaire	21
3.4.2	2 Interview	22
3.5 V	Validity and Reliability	23
<b>3.6</b> N	Method of Analyzing Data	24
СНАРТЕ	R IV	26
FINDING	GS AND DISCUSSIONS	26
4.1 I	Findings	26
4.1.1	1 Findings from Questionnaire	26
4.1.2	2 Findings from Interview	28
4.1.2	2.1 Participants Profiles	28
4.1.2	2.2 Results of Interviews	28
4.1.2	2.2.1 Data Condensation	29
4.1.2	2.2.2 Data Display	32
4.1.2	2.2.2.1 The Students' positive self-grading in writing class	33
4.1.2	2.2.2.2 The Significance of writing	33
4.1.2	2.2.2.3 Challenge fields in Writing Class	34
4.1.2	2.2.2.4 Perceptions of Criticism and Evaluation in	
	Writing Class	34
4.1.2	2.2.2.5 Attitudes Toward Peer and Lecturer Evaluation in	
	Writing Assessment	35
4.1.2	2.2.2.6 Different views on Peer Assessment in	
	Writing Classes	36
4.1.2	2.2.2.7 Peer-Assessment Benefits in Writing Class	36

4.1.2.2.2.8 Positive Influence of Peer Assessment on Writin	g Class
Perception	37
4.1.2.2.3 Data Verification	38
4.2 Discussion	39
4.2.1 Questionnaire	40
4.2.2 Interview	40
4.2.2.1 Peer assessment as an Alternative Evaluation in Wri	iting
Class	41
4.2.2.2 Peer Assessment as a Less Intimidating Approach to	)
Learning Evaluation	42
4.2.2.3 Peer Assessment as a Tool for Students' Personal	
Development	44
CHAPTER V	46
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	46
5.1 Conclusions	46
5.2 Suggestions	46
REFERENCES	47
APPENDICES	52

#### LIST OF APPENDICES

**Appendix A** Usul Judul

Appendix B SK Pembimbing

**Appendix C** Surat Izin Penelitian

**Appendix D** Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory SLWAI Questionnaire by Cheng 2004

**Appendix E** Questionnaire Responses

Appendix F Sixth semester English Students Anxiety Level

**Appendix G** Interview Questions of the Impact of Employing Peer-Assessment

Appendix H Thesis Consultation Card

#### LIST OF TABLE

**Table 1** Levels of the sixth-semester English Students' Anxiety based on the total score of SLWAI Questionnaire by Cheng (2004)

**Table 2** Information of the Interviewees

 Table 3 Data Categorization

Exploring the Students' Perception on the Role of Peer Assessment Method to Reduce Anxiety in Writing Classes: A Study of the SIxth Semester English Students at Sriwijaya University

#### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the students' perception toward the role of peer assessment method to the students writing anxiety reduction by the sixth semester students of English Education Study Program Sriwijaya University. A case study of a qualitative method was applied in this study. A close-ended questionnaire and interview were conducted to collect the data related to the student's writing anxiety level and the peer assessment impacts on their anxiety reduction. A total of 72 participants joined the questionnaires and 6 volunteered participants participated in the interview. The 22 closed-ended questions were adapted from Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) by Cheng 2004 and the data from the interview were analyzed qualitatively using Miles and Huberrman qualitative analysis. The findings, showed that the majority of students (61,1 %) experienced high levels of writing anxiety. This study also figured out that the students' have a positive perception toward the implementation of peer assessment in reducing anxiety in writing class. By giving the new sight of evaluation other than lecture evaluation, reduction of the intimidation atmosphere as well as enhancing the students' perception of their success, this method is believed to influence the students' writing anxiety.

Keywords: students' perception, peer-assessment, anxiety, writing

#### **CHAPTER I**

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background of the study, the problems of the study, the objects of the study and the significance of the study.

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

English is the part of languages in the world that has a significant important role in communication. Learning English is essential since it is used to communicate with people from all over the world and is extensively utilized in various areas, such as academics, business, tourism, politics, etc. Teaching is a learning facilitator, so learning and teaching are inextricably linked (Brown, 2000). People around the world strive for English language proficiency in a variety of educational disciplines. As we know, English has four aspects that have to be learned. Mastery of four fundamental language abilities, such as speaking, reading, listening, and writing, is critical in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student.

Many language learners found writing as the most difficult skill to master or handle (Latiff, 2007; Kurt & Atay, 2007). It requires vocabulary and grammar skills with other elements including punctuations, word orders, and etc. Writing, as a complicated and cognitively demanding task, frequently causes anxiety among English learners, especially those in the intermediate stage of their language journey. This worry can impede effective writing skill acquisition as well as overall language competency. Anxiety in learning, especially in writing can impact the students' performance in learning as well as their motivation. At Addis Ababa University, Abate (1996) investigated English language classroom anxiety, performance on classroom tasks, and test results. In his findings, he suggested that learners' anxiety ratings were negatively and strongly connected with their language performance, and the results implied that anxiety was damaging and that low anxious students performed relatively better than high anxious students.

The source of anxiety for learners in writing can vary based on the atmosphere in the classroom. The main one is that the teachers often make the class as teacher-centered learning. As what has been stated by Mak and Lee (2014) cited on Yu and Zhou (2022) that the main features of English writing classes can be summarized as' one-shot' writing using a product-oriented approach and no use or very limited use of self- and peer assessment, which makes it very difficult for students to assume responsibility for their own learning. Teacher-centered learning makes the students unable to actively involve in classroom activity. Rather than expressing their opinions in class, they prefer to listen to the teacher's explanations. Consequently, when it comes to higher classes where the students' have to give their opinion, the students would feel anxious. Another aspect in causing writing anxiety is the cultural influences. Writing anxiety can also be influenced by cultural variables. In some cultures, for example, there may be a great emphasis on perfection or a fear of making mistakes, which can cause anxiety while writing in a second language. Many students sometimes get anxious when it comes to the evaluation section in learning. Trang et al (2013); Gatcho and Hajan, 2019; Hidayati, 2018; one of them is generally shown anxiety that occurs in students due to fear of assessment and criticism from teachers, better performance of their classmates, high expectations, fear of bad results, and linguistic difficulties. A different study conducted by Cheng et al. 2014 and Crocker et al. 1988 which also states that social practices and the expectations of each culture's parents can be different and create pressure on students.

Concerning this problem, there is a method in learning called peer-assessment. Peer assessment, also known as peer evaluation or peer grading, is an educational process in which students evaluate their peers' work using predetermined criteria. It requires students to provide feedback and assign grades or ratings to their classmates' work. Peer assessment can be utilized for a variety of assignments, projects, or activities and is frequently employed in educational contexts as a formative or summative evaluation approach. The teacher-centered class can be switched to this method to make the students

engage and participate more in the classroom, and it also can reduce their anxiety of making mistakes or being criticized by the teachers because their work would be evaluated by friends.

Peer-assessment in writing class can be a good method to be applied. Peer assessment can be a motivating factor for students to engage in the writing process. It can encourage students to be actively involved in peer review sessions and enhance their awareness of their weaknesses. Many researchers claim that peer-assessment has a good impact in reducing the students' anxiety especially in writing class. Some journals and articles related to this peer assessment also agree with this method. Peer assessment allows students to demonstrate a variety of behaviors, such as writing more purposefully, reflecting on what they have done, and being more active and self-confident in the learning process. As a result, it is critical that the evaluation criteria in the peer review process are clear and understandable in order for the process to be successful (Tunagür;2021).

In this occasion, the researcher found that the peer-assessment method has been used in writing class by English education lecturers in Sriwijaya University. The researcher has experienced anxiety during writing classes before, and when the lecturer used this method in evaluating the writing assignments the researcher became more enjoyable in the learning writing course. However it makes the researcher wonder about the other students' perspective towards this method. How does this method affect the anxiety level of the students?. Besides, the important point is how the role of peer-assessment methods reduce their anxiety, specifically what aspects of the peer-assessment method have significant influence in reducing their anxiety. Therefore the researcher would like to choose the Sixth semester English Students in Indralaya to be the respondents for her research. The sixth-semester of English in University is when students are expected to begin developing their writing abilities in a more organized and sophisticated way. Given that students will likely experience increasingly challenging writing assignments, therefore it is a good moment to evaluate the effectiveness of peer assessment techniques in reducing writing anxiety. During this stage, reducing anxiety and improving writing abilities might help them be ready for more challenging coursework.

The existing literature on peer assessment in writing courses does not fully understand its effectiveness in reducing anxiety, especially among sixth-semester English students at Sriwijaya University. Although previous studies have explored the benefits of peer assessment and its impact on various aspects of writing skills, there is a significant research gap in understanding how peer-assessment specifically addresses anxiety levels in this specific student population. This study aimed to fill this gap by exploring deeply about the students' perception on the role of peer assessment in reducing anxiety of sixth-semester English students at Sriwijaya University. This study aimed to investigate the specific challenges and anxieties these students encountered in writing classes during the 6th semester. By delving deeper into the experiences and perceptions of these students, this study sought to identify key areas where peer assessment can play a central role in reducing anxiety and improving writing skills. Through this research, the researcher seeks to provide valuable insights to inform teaching practice, support students in their language learning journey, and promote a supportive and more advantageous environment.

#### 1.2 The Problems of the Study

The problems of this study are formulated into the following questions:

- 1. What is the level of anxiety in writing among the sixth-semester English Study Program students at Sriwijaya University?
- 2. What was the students' perception on the impact of employing a peer-assessment method on the writing anxiety of the sixth-semester English Study Program students at Sriwijaya University?

#### 1.3 The Objectives of the Study

- 1. To find out the level of anxiety in writing class among the sixth-semester English Study Program students at Sriwijaya University.
- 2. To find out the impact of employing a peer-assessment method on the writing anxiety of the sixth-semester English Study Program students at Sriwijaya University from the students' perspectives.

#### 1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study can be considered in two ways, theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study explains the deeper understanding of reducing anxiety through the implementation of peer-assessment from the students' perspective. Moreover, this research can be a reference for further researchers in researching another side of peer-assessment that contributes to the students' problem in writing courses. They would find the specific information by analyzing the data provided and make novelty of this research. Practically, this research can give a good alternative for the students in writing courses by doing enjoyable assessments with their friends. It also can motivate them to deal with their anxiety, especially in writing courses. Moreover, this study can be helpful for all English teachers to find out the students' perspectives of the use of peer-assessment methods in writing class. With this research, teachers can get a better and more effective way of teaching English especially in writing courses.

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