

**STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE USE OF PEER ASSESSMENT TO
INCREASE STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE CLASSROOM (A
CASE STUDY ON ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION CLASS
THROUGH LESSON STUDY)**

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Abstract

Increasing students' participation in the learning process is an obvious goal in lectures. If only a few students participate by asking questions, answering, involving in discussion, so lecturers have to create the condition that enable students to participate actively to reach the learning goal. This research describes how students view on the use of peer assessment to increase students' participation in the classroom. The sample of this research was the fifth semester students of Palopo Cokroaminoto University which consists of 30 students. This research uses descriptive research. It was done on assessment and evaluation class for four meetings through Lesson Study and the data was gathered through observers' and researcher's observation and questionnaires. This research was carried out by asking the students to discuss the given material and giving oral presentation in group. After having discussion and presentation, students were asked to assess their group mates. After observing the class and administering the questionnaires, it was found that peer assessment is a good way to assess students' participation. Students perceive that peer assessment can make them involved more in the teaching and learning process. The students were active in oral presentation, asking and answering question, performing well on the task, giving more comment on the discussion, and it helped the students to improve their skill that will be used in their future. Some students also suggested the lecturers to use peer assessment in their teaching process, however a few students view it negatively since it is hard for them to concentrate on two activities in the same time (assessing the peer and participating on the lecture) and the use of peer assessment hindered their friendship due to their objective assessment on their peer's lack during the discussion.

Keywords: *students' participation, peer assessment, and lesson study*

Background

Teaching is a process of educating the students to learn and think critically. In teaching process, every lecturer wants the students to participate actively in learning and teaching process and to do this; it is needed lecturer's creativity. Lecturer should use strategies that support and challenge students to participate actively in teaching and learning process. Increasing students' participation in this case doesn't mean that every student should participate in the same way; instead it is to create a situation in which all the students feel they have to involve in the learning process. To reach this goal, lecturer needs to provide alternative way which can be done and it can be through assessment. Lecturer should design assessment method that reflects students' participation during the learning process since it is difficult to grade the students' participation because of its subjective nature especially in cooperative learning. The subjective nature can be caused by many factors, those factors are: the number of the students in the classroom is over (30-40 students), teachers are effortless to come to all group seeing the students'

participation, it is difficult to remember all the students' names and limited time in the classroom.

Due to assessment places very important role in teaching and learning process, so it is needed to design suitable assessment method in order that assessment can be meaningful to everyone who involved in it. One of the assessment methods that can be used is peer assessment. It is an assessment which involves students where students can assess students. It is stated by Swain (2010) that peer assessment is an activity where the students are involved in the process of assessing other students' work. Peer assessment enables children to provide each other with valuable feedback on work so they can learn from and support each other. The opportunity to discuss, explain and challenge each other adds a valuable dimension to learning overall. Peer assessment as an agreement in which individuals consider the amount level, value, worth, quality, or success of the product or outcomes of learning of peers of similar status. Another relevant assertion also stated by Falchikov (2006) that peer assessment requires students to provide either feedback or grades (or both) to their peers on a product or a performance, based on the criteria of excellence for that product or even which students may have been involved in determining. It is clear from those two explanations that peer assessment is an assessment which involves students in it. In this case, students will assess their peers in relating to his/her work by giving feedback and grade.

For sure, in this research, peer assessment is not going to be taken as a part of the students' assessment (assessment of learning) but it is used as assessment for learning. As stated by Deluca at.al. (2012) that "assessment for learning has been touted as one of the most promising pedagogical approaches for enhancing students' learning".

Malvin and Lord (1995) noted that "it is very subjective and complex to assess class participation". So in order to solve this problem, lecturer can apply peer assessment into their teaching. Lecturer distributed assessment rubric which consisted of some criteria that the students used to assess their peer participation during the class.

According to O'Farrell (2004), there are some benefits of using peer assessment, they are:

- a. Peer assessment is becoming widely used as a means of giving feedback to students, arguably more feedback that a lecturer can normally provide.
- b. Peer assessment should benefit both those giving the feedback as well as those receiving it. Giving constructive feedback is a valuable skill. To acquire this skill the student will learn how to study marking/grading schemes or assessment criteria, construct sentences that impart effective comments, and be able to defend their feedback.
- c. Critical reflection, a key skill involved in giving feedback, is an academically valuable one. Students also learn diplomacy, how to receive and act on constructive criticism, as well as the more obvious skills of making explicit and criterion-referencing judgments. In studies carried out, students have reported real benefit in retention of knowledge, enhanced creativity, greater resourcefulness and increased motivation. There are also reported gains in specific deeper knowledge in the subject area itself.

- d. Peer assessment can deepen the student learning experience as students can learn a great deal about their own work from assessing other students' attempts at a similar task. They will also learn about the assessment culture of the institute, become autonomous learners, and develop skills of lifelong learning.

Fritschner (2010) says that students' participation takes place by simply attending class or by orally participating in class through comments or questions or even giving oral presentation. This also includes how students develop an on-task behavior and take affective part in the task or activity assigned to them. It is not, however, equivalent to students' talking time. It is rather measure by the quality of their comments and how far these comments contribute to the completion of the activity within their groups (Wannarka and Ruhl, 2008).

This research is done through lesson study activities. As stated by Hiebert et al. (2002) that lesson study is the process of improving and building knowledge in teaching process that has origin in Japanese elementary education. To make sure in this research, lesson study is proposed for university classroom. There are various stages of lesson study but in this study the research applied three stages, they were plan, do and see. In the plan stage, the lecturer (the researcher) and other lecturers with the same discipline planned the teaching together was done in doing stage. In this stage, the researcher open the class to be observed by some observers (other lecturers) after having the teaching process, the next step is see (reflection) where in this case the researcher and the observer shared their reflection during the teaching and learning process they have observed.

Methodology

This research is a descriptive qualitative research which aims at finding out students' view on the use of peer assessment to increase students' participation in the classroom. It was conducted on students of English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Palopo Cokroaminoto University. The observation was done for four meeting lectures in 2015. The students' participation during the classroom was recorded throughout the lecture hours and there were thirty students involved it. This research was done through lesson study activities. The data was gathered through questionnaires and in analyzing the data, the researcher adopted the theory which is proposed by Fritschner (2010).

Discussion

The purpose of this study is to examine students' view on the use of peer assessment to increase students' participation in the classroom. The finding of this research is grouped into two clusters: students' positive view and negative view. In this research, the students were having classroom presentation and discussion. The researcher combined some teaching method to be applied in the classroom. The process of teaching and learning which happened in the classroom were grouping the students into groups and then administering different copied of teaching material as well as the assessment rubric and assessment form to each of them in group. In the first meeting the researcher explained how and what to do with that scoring rubric, after that the students were asked to read the material, in turn explaining the material in group, and had discussion. In the process of presentation and discussion the researcher sometimes gave additional explanation when

soothing unclear happened delivered by the students. Peer assessment process was done in group after discussion. Each student assessed their group mates and in turn explaining the result of their assessment as well as giving some critics and advices on what their friends did, and will do next time. When assessment was finished, the researcher gave reinforcement related to the material and assessment process. The process of teaching and learning happened for 100 minutes each meeting. After having all the learning and teaching process, the researcher administered four open ended questionnaires to the students to know how they view the use of peer assessment. The questionnaires consist of four general dimensions, they are oral presentation, doing the task, asking question and answering question, and giving comment on the discussion.

As a result of this research, generally students view positively on the use of peer assessment as a method of increasing their participation in the classroom. Referring to the first questionnaire about peer assessment increases students' oral presentation, most of the students said "utilizing peer assessment improves my presentation in group". They explained more that peer assessment forced them to have well presentation because they didn't want to get low score from their peers and it is embarrassing when their peer tell them their presentation weaknesses on the feedback session. As stated by one student that "it was very embarrassing when my peer commented on my oral presentation but honestly it their feedback engaged me to understand more the lesson and perform well in the next meeting" It is supported by the observers' comment on the reflection phase of the first meeting that there were some students still read the material that they presented and it is supposed so because it was the first time for them to use peer assessment. But in the next meeting, students' presentation became better than before where some students have prepared and studied the material by themselves before coming to the classroom. As stated by Spiller (2012:10) that students receiving feedback from their peers can get a wider range of ideas about their work to promote development and improvement.

For the second questionnaire (through the use of peer assessment, students are doing the given task better), a few students expresses that peer assessment motivated them to do well the given task as their tasks were assessed by their peer. "I am shy if my friend see my work so by using peer assessment it forces me to do my best" Another statement from the student said that "I have to do my task well since if I don't then I am afraid to assess my peer's work objectively because they might say your task too is not as good as your comment to me" there was also student say "at the first implementation of peer assessment, I didn't do my best on my task but when I heard my friends' feedback then it challenged me to do my best and my friends' feedback provided me ideas on my task" These supported the theory proposed by O'Farrell (2004) that peer assessment can deepen the student learning experience as students can learn a great deal about their own work from assessing other students' attempts at a similar task

Asking and answering questions is the third questionnaires. Students were asked through the questionnaires about their frequencies in asking and giving question during the class presentation and discussion and most of them said that it improved. "I should force myself to ask and answer question more since I don't want to miss the score of this point". Another student said "During the implementation of peer assessment, I always ask and tried to answer question even in the first and second meeting it was only silly question. It was just to fill my

peer's assessment format but then gradually I feel my questions and answers were qualified since I learned more from more from my peer's feedback before and tried to understand deeply the learning materials". This finding supported the statement stated by Spiller (2012:10) that student can help each other to make sense of the gaps in learning and understanding and to get more sophisticated grasp of the learning process. From these statements, it is clear that peer assessment indeed increased the students' frequencies in asking and giving question.

Giving comment during the discussion is the last questionnaires where most of the students said by applying peer assessment in the classroom then it made the students to give more comment during the discussion since they want to get good mark and feedback from their peer. The student commented "I should comment in the discussion process because if I keep in the dump, I will not get good mark from my friends and also I don't like if my friends comment on my weaknesses related to the discussion so before coming I searched and read the related material before at home". Another student said "using peer assessment forced myself to comment in the discussion and I like it, it also helps me to improve my skills on how to assess, as my preparation in my teaching later". Student add more on the questionnaires that using assessment rubric helped them to know what will be assessed from the learning and improved their learning activities. From these comments, it is clear that the use of peer assessment give some contribution on students' discussion where they give more comment during the discussion. Some also students suggested on the questionnaire in order that the lecturer use peer assessment in their teaching process.

Despite the students' positive perception on the use of peer assessment in the classroom, there were also few of them viewed it negatively. The students said it is hard for them to concentrate on two activities in the same time, assessing the peer and participating on the lecture. As the student said "It is difficult for me to concentrate to assess while participate in the classroom in the same time". The student also viewed that peer assessment has hindered their friendship since they objectively assessed on their peer's lack during the discussion. The student commented "I like using peer assessment in the classroom but unfortunately when I assessed my closed friend objectively. She doesn't like when I expressed her weaknesses on the discussion.

Conclusion

From these finding and discussion, it can be concluded that peer assessment was overall well accepted by the students as they viewed that peer assessment as a way to increase their classroom participation. By using rubric for assessment, it provided students with a clear understanding on what aspect of their classroom participation is assessed and indirectly it forces the students to participate more in the classroom. Even so, there were few of them viewed it negatively. Therefore, it is suggested to use peer assessment as a method of activating students' participation in the classroom but in applying it, it should be given more explanation and training to the students on how to do it in order to minimize students' negative view.

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