

## Improving Students' English Skills through Peer Tutoring Method

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### Abstract

The purpose of the research is to improve students' English skills through Peer Tutoring Method. The research was conducted in order to solve the problem encountered in the classroom; the students lack of interested in English. The design of this research was qualitative. It was obtained through observation and questionnaire tests. The writers apply them to know the improvement of students' English skills through Peer Tutoring Method. Through questionnaire tests, the writers reflected students' performance in a meeting for the second cycle. The writers took 2 cycles. The subjects of this research were third semester of University of Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama Kebumen in academic year 2022/2023. On first cycle, students felt bored, lack of confidence, and common mistake in English. On second cycle, the students' motivation increased, students' enthusiastic increased, and students' English skills increased. The result of this research showed the using of peer tutoring method in the teaching and learning process was effective to improve students' English skills.

**Keywords:** English skills, Peer Tutoring Method

### INTRODUCTION

When teaching English as a foreign language, the teacher must be able to guide and assist students in their learning activities so that they can apply linguistic rules in meaningful conversation. According to Setiyadi (2006) teaching methods have been introduced in language teaching for a long time. The new methods have been developed based on theories of the language teaching and learning. Diane in Larsen-Freeman (2000: 121) said that students may know the rules of linguistic usage to be able to use the language. Therefore, the teaching language in education should be able to help the students to use the foreign language they learn to communicate in social context.

Learning to converse in a foreign language is the consequence of a lengthy language learning process. When young learners begin to acquire a

foreign language, the learning process is similar to that of learning one's mother tongue: after a time of exposure to the language in the classroom (exposure), youngsters attempt to reproduce some of the utterances they hear. Slattery and Willis (2001: 43) stated, although repetition of set phrases does not mean that children are acquiring language it is still very important. They argue that repetition prepares children for meaningful communication in several ways: by helping them to get used to saying English, by allowing them to practice the intonation pattern, and by enabling them to gain confidence, especially if the teacher gives lot of praise.

The writer used a medium that can motivate students. Peer tutoring, in the writer's perspective and experience, is one of the potential activities for students to learn English while also providing them with more enjoyable atmosphere because they are bored with their teacher's usual teaching methods. Ridwan (2016: 198) said, the notion of

the peer tutoring method is a learning method with the help of a competent student in this case mastering the material to teach other students who have not yet mastered it.

Based on the explanation above, the writer decided to conduct research on students in third semester of University of Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama Kebumen in academic year 2022/2023. This research is expected to improve students' English skills through Peer Tutoring Method.

Using a peer tutoring can improve students' English skill also their grammar, vocabulary, speaking, and fluency. According to Dedi Supriyadi et al (2003: 276) argues that peer tutors are one or several people students who are appointed and assigned to help students who experience difficulty learning. In other words, peer tutors means students high-ability students who have been chosen by the teacher to help friends peers who have difficulty understanding the material, so that learning can be take place effectively and efficiently.

Many studies have shown that using peer tutoring into English learning processes is a very effective approach. Surya and Amin (1984: 51-52) state several advantages of peer tutoring, namely:

1. There is an atmosphere of closer and intimate relations between students who assisted by students as helpful tutors.
2. For tutors themselves this learning activity is an opportunity to enrichment in learning and can also increase motivation to learn.
3. Be efficient, meaning that more can be assisted.
4. Can increase the sense of responsibility and self-confidence.

Another significant reason to use peer tutoring in the English Classroom is that peer tutor help students to learn English well. In addition, students are easier to

accept information given by peers, because there is equality in language and communication (Djamarah and Zain, 2010: 25).

## METHOD

The purpose of a study is to solve a problem. It is necessary to describe the design that will be used when the research is conducted. We did this research using the questionnaire method. We carried out this research on the third semester students of UMNU Kebumen.

Ferrance (2000) says that action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully by using the techniques of research Classroom action research is always started with a particular problem found in teaching and learning process that insists to the solved. The solution should be based on the real problem. It means that specific treatment is required to solve the specific problem. Cresswell (2008: 597) states that the educators may use action research they have specific educational problem to solve. In addition, Madya (2007) said that classroom action research consist of four stages, which embody planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

Mills (2000) in Cresswell (2008: 597) states that action research designs are systematic procedures done by teachers (or other individuals in an educational setting) to gather information about, and subsequently improve the ways their particular educational setting operates, their teaching, and their student learning. It means that the teachers should study or identify issues or problems that the students face in order to improve their teaching and learning practice. In addition, Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988) in Cohen, eal (2005: 127) state that action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in a social situation in order to improve the

rationality and justice of their own social or educational practice as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which practices are carried out. Burn (2000: 444) states that there are four basic characteristics of action research, they are: (1) Action research is situational; diagnosing a problem in specific context and attempting to solve it in that context; (2) It is collaboration with teams of researchers and practitioners working together (3) participatory, as team members take part directly in implementing the re (4) It is self-evaluative; modifications are continuously evaluated with changing situation to improve practice.

Kurt Lewin as cited in Arikunto (2006: 92) describes that action research as a cycle of steps which consists of four steps: planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

- a) Planning : How to make a better activity
- b) Acting : The action of plan in the real treatment
- c) Observing : To see how the process of the treatment
- d) Reflecting : Reflect what have been done and decide the next action

We conducted this research in two cycles, where in each cycle we did the learning using peer tutoring method. We make a learning group consist of five students, one as a tutor/teacher and four as audience/students.

In acting, we did peer tutoring in the learning process out of class, and learn some materials. The student who became the tutor, taught the material that others students did not understand. After that, the tutor will explain the material to the audiences.

After our acting, we asked some students to answer the questionnaire we

gave regarding learning by peer tutoring method.

In observing, we observe students and collect data from students. The data we collected after obtaining from giving questionnaires to several students in learning using the peer tutoring method.

In reflection, examine the results of a questionnaire that we gave to several students, to find out what has been achieved, the obstacles faced, and the solutions to the constraints of our method. And the data collection technique we use is a qualitative technique.

From some of the students who were given questionnaires, we can conclude that learning using the peer tutoring method can improve students' performance in the learning process.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The writers conducted this researches with peer tutoring. The writers gives questionnaire based on the peer tutoring for the third semester of University of Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama Kebumen in academic year 2022/2023. This research was conducted in order to solve the problem related to speaking and grammatical error in third semester students at Universitas Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama. Mainly students had no confidence in themselves when speaking in English. They were afraid of making mistakes on grammar or laughed at their friends because they seldom practice using media by their teacher. Students did not understand grammar, lack of vocabulary, and they could not pronounce English words well. The teacher always teaches speaking class by handbook. Students were bored until they feel different when the writer applied the peer tutoring method.

Based on the condition above, the writer chose peer tutoring method to improve the understanding of grammar

and speaking ability of third semester students at Universitas Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama. The writer had created new atmosphere to avoid boredom in students studying English. Learning by peer tutoring was one of techniques that could be applied to improve speaking skill, because in the writer's opinion was one of potential activities that could enrich vocabulary, grammar, and they could practice speaking English with friends confidently.

Peer tutoring activities for students consisted of two activities namely exploration and confirmation. In exploration, the tutor asked the audiences to tell what the material that they do not understand. And then, the tutor explained the material and asked the audiences to pay attention to her explanation. In confirmation, the writer asked the students' to review the material and each student asked to give three examples of the material.

In observing stage, the writer observed the result about planning and acting of the whole process. The writer observed students' response. Result of the writer's observation in first cycle that the students were lack of vocabulary, grammar, and they were not confident when doing speaking. They had no confidence in themselves. The weakness of the students on speaking skill was that speaking subject is not interesting and really made them quickly bored. As example the teacher always used handbook when teaching learning process and he did not used other interesting methods. The writer concluded that students lack vocabulary, grammar, and did not have any confidence when speaking in English. Most the students were passive.

Then, the tutor decided to continue the action for the second cycle. The tutor tried new ideas to solve the problems found during in the acting stage, which covered the following aspects:

- (1) The tutor asked the students to pay more attention of the material

that explained so that they can understand the material well;

- (2) The tutor asked the students to give more examples of the material.
- (3) The tutor asked the students to speak in English confidently so that they can speak English fluently.

The second cycle, the students speaking ability showed better than the first cycle. Most students were interested and they were focus when the tutor explained the materials. They become more familiar with grammar, improve their confidence and enrich their vocabulary. In conclusion, from the result of analysis, the research finding was satisfactory. The students' English skills through peer tutoring had improved. The students were very enjoyment much. So, learned English by peer tutoring method as them form part of enjoyable experience.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion by the previous part, the conclusion can be described as the students' English skills through Peer Tutoring Method was improved. The subjects of this research were third semester of University of Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama Kebumen. This research was conducted in two cycles with four main stages – planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The students' skills improved step by step. Teaching English through Peer Tutoring Method was enjoyable for students as they found few atmosphere, enjoyable experience, enriched vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The students have to be more active to do transactional conversation with their friend. The result of this research showed the using of Peer Tutoring Method in the teaching and learning process of English was effective to improve students' English skills.

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