Oral Peer Feedback in Online Settings to Foster Self-Regulated Learning: Students Perceptions and Preferences

Tina Priyantin*1 2, Nenden Sri Lengkanawati1, Didi Suherdi1

1 Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
2 Universitas Pakuan
*Corresponding author. Email: tina.priyantin1275@upi.edu

ABSTRACT
Online peer feedback is believed to influence students’ progress more effectively and efficiently since it provides more interesting learning and evaluation. However, there were only some studies which relate peer feedback and self-regulated learning. A qualitative method was adopted with observations and an open-ended questionnaire to collect the data. This study investigates how students perceive oral peer feedback in online settings and their preferences to the types and models of peer feedback and how online peer feedback stimulated self-regulation. The results revealed that students tended to produce more motivational peer feedback than the corrective one. They also preferred to have online peer feedback in terms of attractive application and time flexibility. Written feedback was also the preference due to their lack of confidence in giving oral peer feedback and their inability as an assessee to identify oral peer comments. Students perceived oral peer feedback in online settings as beneficial and useful to increase their confidence and speaking skill, but not significantly their ability to argue. Peer feedback also stimulated some items in self-regulation mostly on receiving, evaluating, triggering, searching, and assessing. Future research is suggested to develop self-regulated learning through oral peer feedback and how it impacts students’ oral performances.

Keywords: Learning assessment, peer feedback, self-regulated learning, technology-enhanced language learning

1. INTRODUCTION

Integrating technology into the teaching and learning process gives a lot of benefits of both teachers and students. One of the most important questions in teaching and learning involves increasing students’ engagement in learning (Akbari et al., 2016), and nowadays, teachers are faced with the challenge of fostering the development of teaching methods and technology tools to support their students who are digital natives. Moreover, technology is useful in improving the quality of input, making communication authentic, and providing timely and relevant feedback (Shadiev & Yang, 2020).

Regarding feedback in language learning, specifically dealing with students’ performances, it is mostly done by teachers to give awareness to students on their strengths and weaknesses. However, the practice of giving feedback has transformed from students passively receiving feedback from the teacher to peer feedback; and this type of feedback is known to be more powerful even in an online setting (Saidalvi & Samad, 2019). Providing feedback is important in giving students a good idea of the criteria and developing a sense of confidence while receiving feedback mostly serves to improve their performances or products (van der Pol et al., 2008).

Even though there are still some voices challenging about the effectiveness of peer feedback and consider it as a magic wand to improve language skills (Wu & Miller, 2020), the trend of web-based technologies has opened up more opportunities for peer feedback to be implemented comparing to the traditional classroom feedback which has limitations in terms of time and space (Luo, 2016). It is believed that online peer feedback or assessment influences quick students’ learning progress as it provides better learning and evaluation than traditional methods and it can be more efficient than in a traditional classroom setting (Demir, 2018). Saeed et al. (2018) found that asynchronous peer
feedback foster learners’ engagement in terms of global issues in writing. It is supported by Demirbilek (2015) who stated that students perceived technology tools beneficial in the peer feedback process to engage them and improve their critical thinking skills.

In tertiary levels, peer feedback processes are getting more popular since they can contribute to a student-centred approach to learning such as enabling students to become active and responsible to improve the quality of their learning (Ion et al., 2019), and it is related to self-regulation. Instead of teacher-student interactions, peer-to-peer interactions offer more opportunities for students to learn and encourage them to practice self-regulatory skills (Lim et al., 2020). One way to help students become self-regulated and life-long learners is for teachers to provide the students with a supportive social learning environment that incorporates feedback techniques such as peer assessment (Hsu & Huang, 2015).

Ongoing and interactive peer formative feedback supported students to develop self-regulated learning as a key to promote engagement with meaningful experiences (Gikandi & Morrow, 2016). The combination of group awareness and peer assessment can also influence self-regulated learning as long as it is done intensively (Lin, 2018). However, not much research investigated how peer feedback can be implemented to stimulate self-regulated learning (SRL). Furthermore, most studies were found to use technology tools in peer feedback to assess students’ writing tasks and skills but not many of them assess oral performances. The type of peer feedback was also found mostly in written but only a few in oral tasks.

Given the established research gap and the increased popularity of online peer feedback, educators and researchers need to consider the implementation especially during the distance learning, explore the possible factors associated with students’ perceptions and preferences of peer feedback, and how it can help them guide to a better learning strategy. Therefore, the present study was conducted to investigate how students perceive oral peer feedback in online settings, in terms of the benefits as well as to find out their preferences to the types and models of peer feedback. Moreover, this study was aimed to figure out how oral peer feedback stimulated students’ self-regulated learning. To achieve the purposes of the study, the following research questions were investigated.

1. What types of feedback do students use in giving comments?
2. What kind of peer feedback models do students prefer to give and receive?
3. How do students perceive oral peer feedback in terms of increasing their confidence, speaking skill, and ability to argue?
4. To what extent does oral peer feedback stimulate self-regulated learning?

In the next sections, we discuss the main theories used as the basis for investigating students’ perceptions and preferences of peer feedback and how it stimulates self-regulated learning as well as explaining our methodology. Then, we provide a detailed description of the findings and discussion of the reviewed studies according to the research questions. Implications are inserted in the conclusions which can be useful for EFL pedagogy of teaching speaking and technology integration in peer feedback and also recommendations for future research. The results of the study will provide insights for teachers on the importance of oral peer feedback in the language teaching and learning dealing with students’ engagement and quality improvement of the learning. Furthermore, further understanding on the importance of developing self-regulation will facilitate students to increase their metacognitive awareness in learning. The study will also serve as a future reference for researchers on the subject of peer feedback in online settings and self-regulation.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study aimed to investigate students’ perception of the implementation of online oral peer feedback as well as their preferences to the types and models of peer feedback and to figure out how oral peer feedback stimulated students’ self-regulation. Qualitative research was adopted in this study with an inductive approach, which means specific observations and measures are done at the beginning, then followed by detecting patterns and regularities, formulating some tentative hypothesis to explore, and finally developing general conclusions (Hamied, 2017).

2.2. Participants

The present study involved 15 student-teachers of the 3rd year, majoring in English Education at a private university. They are currently enrolled in the course of Public Speaking offered by the author as a part of the study program curriculum. Of the two classes consisting of 42 students, 15 of them were selected randomly as the participants. During online learning, students learn through the university learning management system and other platforms.

2.3. Instruments

A Public Speaking evaluation form, adapted from tools for public speaking, designed by the Ohio State University (1998), was used to help students identify the components for peer feedback. The elements include knowledge, appropriateness, creativity, speech
development, delivery, appearance, and presentation. Field notes were also developed as the instrument of video observations by listing the keywords which needed to be observed.

To gain the data on students’ perceptions and preferences on the benefits of oral peer feedback in online settings as well as the reasons behind such opinions, a set of online open-ended questionnaire was designed using the Google form, containing 7 items related to student’s perception and preferences as an assessor and 6 items as an asseesee. The last instrument was The Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ) items, developed by Miller & Brown (1991), which consisted of 63 items. It was used as a guide to figure out how peer feedback stimulated self-regulated learning.

2.4. Data Collection

The Public Speaking course assigns students to record videos of their speech performances and upload them to Flipgrid, a free learning web tool or mobile application which has been utilized for course introductions, group discussions, content review, and assessment tool provided with assessment criterion (rubrics) to support learning objectives. Flipgrid is considered as a platform which can address the need of changing learners, increase students’ engagement, promote students’ verbal development, and increase instructors’ awareness of students’ understanding on the course concepts (Taylor & Hinchman, 2020).

Before uploading their videos, the students were given an instructional scaffold on how to operate the application. After uploading their videos, students were assigned to watch their peers’ videos and give formative feedback or comments on two of their peers’ performances. They were provided with a Public Speaking evaluation form as a guide, and they were also given brief training on how to evaluate or review their peers’ videos. The feedback was done orally by recording videos directly on their peers’ videos.

Observations on the feedback videos were then conducted to identify the types of feedback the students did by writing the information on the field notes based on the determined keywords. The final procedures were distributing the questionnaire, writing the students’ answers on a table, and connecting them with the items of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire.

2.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis began by analyzing the field notes to identify the types of feedback which were categorized into two types including motivational and corrective peer feedback. Motivational feedback provides motivation to a learner to perform a task and does not improve learning but rather makes the learner feel good on the task performed (Saidalvi & Samad, 2019). Corrective feedback refers to the information given by the reviewer which focuses on error correction of the task performance or content (Saidalvi & Samad, 2019) and it facilitates learners’ noticing of the differences between their incorrect utterance and the target form (Kartchava et al., 2020).

Then, the students’ answers on the questionnaire were analyzed to figure out their perceptions of the benefits of online oral peer feedback, specifically in increasing their confidence, speaking skill, and ability to argue. Moreover, students’ preferences to the models of peer feedback were also analyzed concerning their roles as the assessors and assesses as they stated in the questionnaire. Deductive coding of the data was done to analyze how oral peer feedback stimulated self-regulated learning, by connecting students’ answers on the questionnaire to the SRQ items and categorizing them into a seven-step model of self-regulation which included Receiving relevant information (R), Evaluating the information (E), Triggering Change (T), Searching for options (S), Formulating a Plan (F), Implementing the plan (I), and Assessing the plan (A).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. What types of feedback do students use in giving comments?

The results of video observations concern the types of peer feedback that the students use. It was found that most students produced motivational feedback when they praised their peers’ performances by saying words such as “good”, “interesting”, “excellent”, “I like your…”, “I love the way…”, regarding the topic appropriateness, speech delivery (gestures and facial expressions), and appearance (grooming and appropriate dress). The findings were supported by the data from the questionnaire that the students focused on speech topics, speech delivery, and appearance and gave positive feedback to motivate their peers. When receiving the feedback, most of them also noticed that their peers commented on the three elements.

Saidalvi and Samad (2019) got similar finding in their study that students offered more motivational feedback for delivery and voice control skills and they seem more confident to provide feedback in this area of public speaking skills since it is observable during the presentation of the speech. They might lack the knowledge related to language specifically; thus were reluctant to comment on language and proficiency skills (Saidalvi & Samad, 2019). Cheung and Yang (2019) highlighted this challenge in their study that the subject knowledge was one of the factors which made the feedback was too general. Saeed et al. (2018) supported that learners’ linguistic ability lead to the failure of revising their peers’ tasks.
Regarding the corrective feedback, all students concerned, not only on the language skills and components, but also the knowledge of Public Speaking based on the elements provided in the evaluation form. Most students corrected the presentation element, focusing most on mispronunciation and transitions between each part of the speech, and a few of them highlighted the grammatical errors. A few students also corrected the speech development which dealt with the speech organization (introduction, body, summary/closing) and also the speaking style which included in the creativity element. The delivery method was also commented by some students, by correcting the voice volume and the speed.

The results of the questionnaire also showed that as the assessors, most of them inserted the elements in the evaluation form in giving feedback although not all were used, depending on the errors found from their peers’ performance. Of the 7 elements, they stated that only inserted 5 of them including the knowledge, creativity, speech development, delivery method, and presentation, but no correction at all on the elements of appropriateness and appearance. As the asseesees, all students noticed that their peers corrected most on the pronunciation.

This should be a consideration to raise students’ comfort levels to give feedback to peers when teachers plan peer feedback activities (Demirbilek, 2015) because sometimes students are uncomfortable to give or receive negative feedback. An alternative to do is by allowing students to use pseudonyms but it can only be applied in the written peer feedback. For oral peer feedback, teachers and students can have an agreement not to use pseudonyms since they have to record videos. Teachers should also support the students by training or scaffolds on how to implement peer feedback activities via tools or guidelines (Le Hebel et al., 2018). Demir (2018) reinforced that students needed to recognize that feedback which identified problems and gave suggestions was a significant predictor of the performance of the assessors themselves and that positive feedback affected the asseeese’s performance.

3.2. What kind of peer feedback models do students prefer to give and receive?

To answer the second research questions, students were asked about their preferences on the peer feedback model which include online or offline peer feedback, and oral or written peer feedback. The questions were given in representing two roles, as an assessor and an asseeesee. As assessors, 65% of them preferred to give feedback in the online setting because they had more time to prepare what to comment in the feedback. However, 30% of them chose offline peer feedback regarding mostly on their unwillingness to record themselves in a video, and the direct and immediate communication/interactions became the considerations of their preferences to have the offline feedback to avoid misunderstanding. One student answered that both models would do depending on the class situations.

Similar responses were found in the role as assessesees that 65% of them preferred to receive online peer feedback to the offline one because they could download the videos and rewind them a few times to take notes on the elements to improve. Some of them responded that receiving peer feedback in an online setting was more interesting and understandable.

Regarding oral and written peer feedback, as an assessor, 45% of them preferred to give the oral one since they could practice their speaking skill and the voice tones, as well as gestures, could support what they meant in the comments. On the other hand, the rest of the students (55%) chose written feedback because they felt nervous and unconfident in giving oral feedback, regarding their lack of knowledge in speaking. Moreover, written feedback could be given in more detailed ways as they had much time to check and recheck before submitting the feedback. For those who love writing, written feedback could also help them practice their writing skill. It is different from the study done by Espasa et al. (2019) in which students preferred to receive video feedback to promote more dialogue and interaction between students and lecturers. In the present study, students were found to prefer written peer feedback concerning their lack of confidence in performing oral tasks and their inability to identify their peer comments. It is in line with Tseng et al. (2019) who found that students perceived written feedback more helpful for grammar and lexical advice, which was hard to follow in the video feedback because of the students’ speech and the complexity of grammar rules.

In receiving feedback, 60% of students showed their preferences to receive the written peer feedback because they believed that it would be more detailed and understandable as they found that some of their peers spoke unclearly, so they got confused what to improve. In return, 40% of them preferred to get oral feedback because they could learn the way their peers talking in English so it could give them insights on improving their speaking style and skill.

The peer feedback models in this study implemented oral feedback (video feedback) and were done in an online setting. The findings revealed that more students preferred to give online peer feedback mostly regarding time flexibility to organize the content before giving the feedback. It is supported by Symons and Blannin (2019) in their study who stated that unlike face-to-face feedback, students could develop their feedback and had more opportunity and edit their comments in the online setting. Deeley (2018) reinforced that using technology helped students to be more objective and gave them more time to reflect carefully.
3.3. RQ 3: How do students perceive oral peer feedback in terms of increasing their confidence, speaking skill, and ability to argue?

Students’ perceptions of certain fields can be seen from various dimensions; however, the current study only investigated the benefits of oral peer feedback in online settings, in terms of increasing their confidence, ability to argue, and speaking skill. Moreover, the students were also asked about the challenges they found during the process. All students answered that by giving oral peer feedback, they could increase their self-confidence because it was done in asynchronous learning, so they had more opportunities to organize what they were going to say in the comments. Moreover, by seeing other friends giving comments while some of them were known to have a lack of confidence, they could get the motivation to also show their confidence. However, even though their confidence in talking was increasing, it did not guarantee that they could also build their ability to argue. Six students stated that they were confident to give arguments as they did it based on the facts or evidence. Three students responded the same, but they were worried their peers would not accept the comments. Here is an example of one student:

“Yes, but I’m afraid if I’m giving feedback to my friends mad at me because there are people who don’t accept comments from others. So, I just give positive feedback that can make them improve.”

The rest of the students hesitated that they could increase their ability to argue due to their lack of knowledge, as one student stated:

“I think giving oral feedback can increase my confidence, but I don't think it also can increase my ability to argue. Because I think arguing needs good knowledge not only confidence.”

In dealing with speaking skill, all students responded that oral peer feedback helped them increase their speaking skill as they had an opportunity to practice and learn how to deliver oral tasks by also seeing their peers’ performances as the examples. Besides, they also learned to identify the language skills and components to be inserted in the comments which made them aware to improve their performances as well.

From the assesses’ point of view, all students perceived oral peer feedback as a good learning process for them to improve their oral performances since they were often unaware of making mistakes but from the peer feedback, they could notice some points to improve in the next performances. As it was stated by one student:

“Yes, it helped me to know my mistakes and improve my next performance because from that feedback I could know the mistakes that I didn’t notice before.”

Of the responses, there was one student who suggested to also inserted the written feedback together with the oral one as he/she could not catch one of the peers’ comments due to the unclear pronunciation as well as the components to improve.

Among the benefits of peer feedback, all students also showed positive responses on the use of Flipgrid as a useful and interesting learning application for speaking course especially during the distance learning, by considering some interesting features provided so they could interact and communicate with their peers as well as learning from each other through peer comments. However, challenges were also faced due to the internet connection, which was often found unstable, so they needed a long time for uploading process and it affected the quality of the videos especially when they recorded using other platforms, not directly from Flipgrid application. The findings were in line with Yeh et al. (2019) in their study who found that utilizing students with technological learning tool for speaking practice combined with peer feedback had a positive impact on students’ speaking performance.

3.4. To what extent does oral peer feedback stimulate self-regulated learning?

From the students’ responses through the questionnaire, it could be identified that peer feedback can foster students’ self-regulated learning although they still could not notice the terms. The author tried to analyze the results of the questionnaire by matching them with the items provided in the SRQ.

Table 1 shows the examples of students’ responses on the questionnaire and how they are connected to the SRQ Items which are categorized into 7 steps of self-regulation. Of 63 items, there were identified only 23 items of self-regulation which matched the students’ answers. Most of them related to the 5 steps including receiving, evaluating, triggering, searching, and assessing since they only did the peer feedback for one round performance.

Table 1. Examples of Learning Strategy and Self-Regulation Items

| Steps  | Examples of Students’ Learning Strategy | SRQ Items (described more detailed in Appendix 3) |
|--------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Receiving (R) | ‘I didn’t notice my mistakes until my friends told me’ | 8, 15, 36, 50, 57 |
Other people can identify my mistakes that I didn’t realize. I learn from my mistakes to improve my next speech performance.

Evaluating (E) ‘I feel happy because the feedback matches my speech quality’ 16, 23, 44, 51, 58

I know what went wrong with my performance and I still need to learn from my friends’

Triggering (T) ‘I notice to improve my pronunciation from the feedback’ 3, 17, 38, 52

I have to focus on the pronunciation and body language’

Searching (S) ‘I will read more articles and prepare more carefully’ 11, 32, 39, 46

‘By giving feedback, I need to focus on my friends’ performances and increase my knowledge’

Formulating (F) -

Implementing (I) -

Assessing (A) ‘By practicing and paying attention to my error points, I have to change to do better than before’ 7, 14, 28, 35, 63

Formulating and implementing steps were still not found because they still had no opportunity to develop their new learning strategy to plan and prepare for the next performances.

It was found in a previous study conducted by Seker, 2016 that teachers are not being fully aware of the need to incorporate SRL instruction into classroom practices. Teachers need to understand that both SRL and peer formative assessment are viewed as emergent phenomena fundamentally shaped by individual, social, contextual, and cultural factors (Greene, 2020). (Bai & Wang, 2020) supported that school curriculums should include self-regulated learning as an important teaching objective. Peer learning, including peer feedback, is one of the important elements to enhance students’ self-regulation behaviours in the virtual learning environment, such as develop stronger friendships, better manage challenges faced in their study, as well as to set goals and organize learning to achieve better academic outcomes (Lim et al., 2020)

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the present study appear to draw some conclusions as well as implications. First, regarding the types of peer feedback in which students produced more motivational instead of corrective feedback teachers are suggested to give more intensive training before and after the peer feedback and facilitate students with continuous practice the peer feedback activity in a few rounds, as well as giving feedback on the peer feedback to improve the quality.

Second, students’ preferences to online and written peer feedback imply the teachers should digitally be literate on the use of technological tools and how to integrate into the language learning to enhance students’ skill or ability concerning the learning objectives. Asynchronous learning mode is considered more effective for students to practice peer feedback, either in oral or written forms. The use of Flipgrid application can be considered to use in the speaking class specifically when teachers and researchers would like to implement both oral and written peer feedback since the app provides both models of peer feedback. Researchers should also be able to look for new and more specific measures to assess the pedagogical and educational values by using these new technologies (Caws & Heift, 2016) in (Farr & Murray, 2016).

Third, oral peer feedback in an online setting is considered beneficial for students to increase their confidence and speaking skill but not their ability to argue. Therefore, there is the necessity of a crucial phase of discussion after assessment between peers and with the teacher during the phase of correction (Le Hebel et al., 2018) so students can notice what components they miss to insert in the previous feedback. Interactive and reflective peer-peer feedback processes foster personalised and transformative learning (Gikandi & Morrow, 2016).

Finally, the present study proved that oral peer feedback could foster students’ self-regulated learning although the findings were not based on the students’ self-identification but by analysing their answers which were matched with the SRQ items. The identification only covers around 30% of the whole items of SRQ. Exploring self-regulated learning in language learning will be one of the ways for learners to also build their metacognitive awareness. By creating a motivating
learning environment which makes students enjoyable. Yu et al. (2020) state that they are more likely to initiate their learning and plan their learning activities. Some weaknesses are still found much in this study, and therefore future research needs to be conducted concerning the development of self-regulated learning through oral peer feedback and how it impacts students’ performances.

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