

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Peer assessment is an assessment method that has been widely used by educators to be able to monitor their students' learning of a course. It is a phenomenon that must be known to provide deeper information regarding the effectiveness of peer assessment in speaking classes. Student perception is one way to find out how peer assessment process in the speaking class and can provide useful information for students' speaking development. As White (2009) argued that students' point of view matters because of its effect on their learning. Peer assessment has given a positive response from students in speaking class. Peer assessment is an arrangement in which individuals consider the amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes of learning of peers of similar status (Topping, 2009).

Students' perceptions of peer assessment need to be examined not only for the success of student learning but also for reflection on their learning and making students become a good assessor. Being a good assessor is not easy, it takes skill and good understanding from an individual, this is why it is important to examine how students understand in assessing a friend's work, whether they are proficient or don't even know at all. From the students' point of view, classroom assessment information is not merely information 'about' himself or herself. Rather, it forms a major part of his or her learning life, becoming part of the lessons he or she is expected to learn, the relationship she or he has with the teacher and the subject matter, and relationships with peers (White, 2009). Furthermore, students hold strong views about assessment methods and that these perceptions play a significant role in how they approach learning.

Peer assessment has been studied in various learning classes in EFL contexts, including in speaking classes. Several previous studies on peer assessment in the speaking class showed positive responses from students. First, Lv (2013) examined English majors' perceptions and attitudes toward peer assessment in English public speaking classes. The result showed positive attitudes toward peer assessment that students in China greatly desire to excel, by becoming effective English speakers. This can be achieved with students' active participation in the learning process. Second, Faoyan (2006) examined students' perception of peer assessment in speaking performance. The result showed positive students' perceptions, there are; improved their skills in verbal communication, helped them to understand what other peers think, provided students with useful feedback about their performance, motivated students to learn to speak English, and helped students to develop a sense of participation, increased the teacher-student interaction and among students interaction, involved students in the development of peer assessment criteria. Peer assessment in the speaking class also has a deficiency. According to Lv (2013) stated that some problems or doubts, such as the validity and reliability of PA. Students feel less clear in assessing the criteria provided because it is not clear where and what to assess.

Peer assessment has weaknesses. Therefore, this study provides a focus on students' perceptions of peer assessment based on social constructivism theory about how students feel and experience as well as how the difficulties are felt beside the lack of reliability and validity of the peer assessment process and how their skills and knowledge are when assessing a friend's work. This is important to examine because if students are not equipped with skills and understanding in assessing then the assessment will be inaccurate and injustice.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The formulation of the problem in this present research is “How are the EFL students’ perception towards the use of peer assessment in speaking course?”.

1.3 Operational Definitions

This operational definition is to avoid misunderstanding, it is better to explain terms about the research keyword, as follows:

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| 1.3.1 Student’s Perception | : Perception is the process of attaining or understanding sensory information by students. |
| 1.3.2 Peer Assessment | : An arrangement of peers to consider the level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes of learning of others of similar learning status. |
| 1.3.3 Speaking | : Is a skill which performed in the use of language to express meaning so that others can understand it. |
| 1.3.4 Social Constructivism | : is a theory of knowledge in sociology and communication that examines the knowledge and understandings of the world which was developed jointly by individuals. |

1.4 Aim of the Research

The research aims to investigate the students' perception of peer assessment in the speaking course.

1.5 Significances of the Research

1.5.1 Theoretical Use

Theoretically, this research will expand the literature on how the EFL students' perception toward peer assessment in the speaking course as the information about students' reflection on their speaking learning and for become a good assessor.

1.5.2 Empirical Use

The results of this research will provide empirical insights of how are the EFL students' perception about the use of PA in speaking course as their reflection of their learning and become a good assessor.

1.5.3 Practical Use

The result of this research will point out on how EFL students' perception toward the use of PA in learning speaking and its contribution to the education field as a reflection for students and also as a good assessor.