USING PEER FEEDBACK IN IMPROVING 10TH GRADE STUDENTS' ENGLISH WRITING PERFORMANCE

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Received:	27/10/2023	The study was conducted with the hope that the result gained could clarify the effects of peer feedback on students' writing performance at a high school, Thai Nguyen province. Based on the aims, an action research design was employed. In order to achieve the goals, the researcher conducted the study for 10 weeks with the participation of 30 students from class 10A1 at a high school. During the procedure of the study, the students participated in writing lessons using the peer feedback method by the teacher. The document analysis and the questionnaire for students were chosen to be the data collection instruments to find out the effects of using the peer feedback method on the students' writing performance after the intervention. The research results showed that there was a remarkable improvement in the students' writing performance after the intervention and most of the students had positive attitudes and good behavior towards the use of peer feedback in writing lessons.
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KEYWORDS		
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SỬ DỤNG PHẢN HỒI ĐỒNG ĐẲNG TRONG VIỆC CẢI THIỆN KHẢ NĂNG VIẾT TIẾNG ANH CỦA HỌC SINH LỚP 10

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THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO		TÓM TẮT
Ngày nhận bài:	27/10/2023	Nghiên cứu được thực hiện với hy vọng kết quả thu được có thể làm rõ hơn ảnh hưởng của phản hồi đồng đẳng đến khả năng viết của học sinh tại một trường trung học phổ thông thuộc tỉnh Thái Nguyên. Dựa trên các mục tiêu, một thiết kế nghiên cứu hành động đã được sử dụng. Để đạt được mục tiêu đề ra, nghiên cứu viên đã tiến hành nghiên cứu trong thời gian 10 tuần với sự tham gia của 30 học sinh lớp 10A1 một trường trung học phổ thông. Trong quá trình nghiên cứu, học sinh đã tham gia viết bài bằng phương pháp phản hồi đồng đẳng của giáo viên. Việc phân tích tài liệu và bảng hỏi dành cho sinh viên được chọn làm công cụ thu thập số liệu nhằm tìm hiểu ảnh hưởng của việc sử dụng phương pháp phản hồi đồng đẳng đến khả năng viết của học sinh sau can thiệp. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy sau can thiệp, khả năng viết của học sinh có sự cải thiện rõ rệt và hầu hết học sinh đều có thái độ tích cực và hành vi tốt đối với việc sử dụng phản hồi đồng đẳng trong giờ học viết.
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1. Introduction

Learning a second language or a foreign language has always included receiving feedback. In terms of feedback kinds, various researchers have examined the usefulness of instructor feedback in the learning of a second language. Peer assessment is investigated as a kind of feedback in this paper. In today's world, learning English is no longer solely the responsibility of the language teacher. Furthermore, the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language has moved dramatically from a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach.

Peer feedback is beneficial because it assists students in comprehending the assessment criteria and so allows for improvement based on those criteria. It also promotes a better comprehension of the learning subject by highlighting students' strengths and weaknesses, encourages participation, and assists students in comprehending the evaluation requirements [1]. Additionally, as [2] point out, active student participation in assessment design, choices, criteria, and judgments is a more long-term preparation for later job life. In contrast to other modes of assessment, according to [3], peer evaluation encourages students to be more active and productive in a cooperative context. Peer evaluation is intricately incorporated into and aligned with students' efforts during the instructional process [4]. Peer assessments improve students' sense of responsibility for both the assessment process and the quality of their learning results, which has a positive impact on their personal development.

According to [5], many students regard writing to be the hardest subject to study. It is not easy for students to write in English. They feel bored because their teacher just asks them to open dictionaries when they want to write. One research shows that problems in writing are as follows: limited vocabulary 8%, difficulty in organizing ideas 16 %, no ideas to write 20 %, no motivation to write 20 % and lack of confidence 36 % [6].

From the experience as a teacher at high school, the writer found some difficulties arising during the process of teaching writing for the students at the pre-intermediate level such as content, organization ideas, language, and mechanic use. In fact, they were complex problems that most teachers encountered while teaching English at high schools. The consequence of this current issue lied in the learners' bad performance in writing activities, as in each examination [7]. Therefore, the study focused on four aspects: vocabulary; content and organization of ideas; language use (grammar); and mechanical use because the students lacked these aspects when they wrote in English. It was suggested that using peer feedback should improve learners' writing skills; thenceforward, boosting learners' writing performance [8]. This had taken the concern of many teachers.

To accomplish the aims, the study would be carried out with the hope of setting up tentative answers to the two following questions:

1. How does peer feedback improve the students' writing performance?
2. What are the students' attitudes towards the application of peer feedback in writing performance?

2. Methodology

2.1. Action research design

The researcher adopted the action research approach to examine the effects of using peer feedback on 10th grade students' writing skills at a high school in the second semester of the school year 2021/2022.

2.2. Subjects of the study

The study involved 30 10th grade students at a high school in Thai Nguyen province who had been studying English for at least seven years and were at the elementary to pre-intermediate level. The researcher selected students from class 10A1 due to their greater experience in learning English and better writing ability than other classes. The researcher was also the teacher of the class and wanted to find a way to help students with their writing skills. The class had an extra English period per week, making it an ideal choice for the study.

2.3. Data collection instruments

Two data collection instruments were utilized in the study, including document analysis and a questionnaire.

2.4. Research design

The process of incorporating peer feedback into a course involves several key steps. Step 1 entails comprehensive planning, beginning with the evaluation of how peer feedback aligns with the course's framework and objectives. Additionally, designing peer-feedback worksheets tailored for the feedback session is crucial during this phase. Step 2 involves taking action, implementing the planned peer-feedback system within the course structure. Step 3 focuses on observation, closely monitoring the peer-feedback sessions and their impact on the learning environment. Finally, step 4 centers on reflection, allowing for an assessment of the effectiveness of the peer-feedback process, identifying areas for improvement, and considering its overall contribution to the learning experience. Each step plays a pivotal role in successfully integrating peer feedback into the course, fostering a collaborative and enriching learning environment for students.

### 2.5. Data analysis procedures

For analysis, the researcher collected the first and final drafts of each lesson to analyze and evaluate. The outcomes of the tests would examine using the Microsoft Excel application.

3. Findings

3.1. Findings from the first and final drafts

3.1.1. Feedback on content and ideas organization

The two main points in ideas organization the students were expected to give feedback to are the topic sentence and supporting ideas of the whole paragraph. Students were informed to focus on these four main points when giving feedback to their peers. The data analysis showed that not many students focused on the mistakes related to covering all genres as revealed in Figure 1.
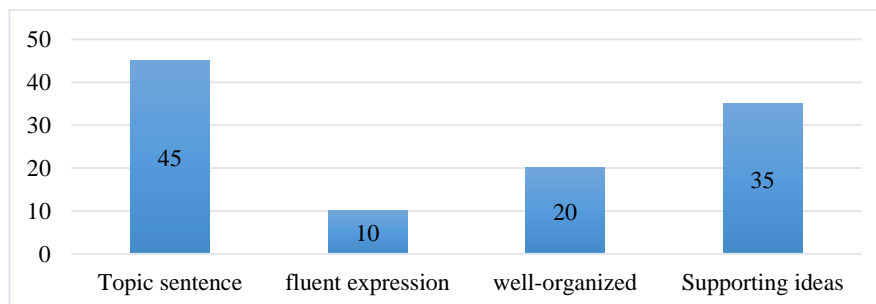
Figure 1. *The percentage of students who gave feedback*

Based on Figure 1, the students gave the least feedback on fluent expression (10%) and the most feedback on topic sentence (45%). Feedback on well-organized and supporting ideas was moderate, at 20% and 35% respectively.

Table 1. *Student's improvement after receiving peer feedback*

Aspects	The number of mistakes indicated in the first drafts	The number of mistakes indicated in the second drafts
Topic sentence	13	3
Fluent expression	10	0
Well-organized	15	2
Supporting ideas	17	5

According to table 1, there were 55 mistakes related to paragraph organization in the first drafts and 10 of them were corrected in the second drafts, which is 18%. Out of the 10 corrected mistakes, 3 were related to the topic sentence, 0 were related to fluent expression, 2 were related to well-organized, and 5 were related to supporting ideas. The lowest correction rate was for fluent expression (0%) while the highest correction rate was for supporting ideas (50%). The correction rate for topic sentence was around 30%.

3.1.2. Feedback on grammar

In contrast to covering all genres, all the students paid attention to grammar when they gave feedback to their peers. They indicated the mistakes for their peers by underlining the mistakes and using the symbols to call out the name of mistakes.
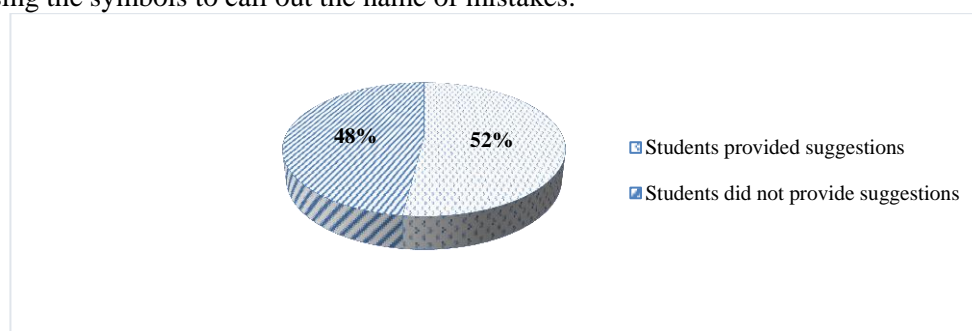
Figure 2. *The percentage of students who provided suggestions for the grammatical mistakes*

Although all the students indicated the mistakes of grammar, not all of them provided suggestion for correcting mistakes. This is shown in figure 2 in which 52% the students provided suggestion while 48% of them did not.

The table 2 provides valuable insights into the number of mistakes indicated, along with the corresponding counts of correct and incorrect suggestions made by the students.

Table 2. *Students' giving feedback on grammar*

Types of grammatical mistakes	The number of mistakes indicated	The number of correct suggestions	The number of incorrect suggestions
The use of verbs	110	53	6
Articles	11	2	1
Preposition	10	5	2
Tenses	7	3	1
Total	**138**	**62**	**10**

As shown in table 2, there were totally 138 indicated mistakes of the four types. However, the mistakes indicated in each type had different percentage. The highest percentage belongs to the mistakes related to the use of verbs (80%). The number of mistakes related to articles and preposition were nearly the same (one was 8% and the other was 7%). The number of tense mistakes indicated was the lowest with only 5%.

Table 3 illustrates a comparison between the number of grammatical errors present in students' initial drafts and the subsequent enhancements observed in their second drafts following the reception of peer feedback.

Table 3. *Students' giving feedback on grammar after receiving peer feedback*

Types of mistakes	The number of mistakes in the first drafts	The number of mistakes in the second drafts
The use of verbs	120	100
Articles	11	9
Preposition	10	7
Tenses	50	35

In a total of 191 grammar mistakes changed correctly, the number of mistakes related to the use of verbs was 120, articles were 11, prepositions were 10, and tenses was 50. In comparison to the number of mistakes indicated in the first drafts, the percentage of the use of verbs mistakes changed correctly in the second drafts was highest (83%). The percentage of corrected changes related to the use of articles was 81% and the lowest percentage belonged to the preposition and tenses, about 70%.

3.1.3. Feedback on vocabulary

In addition to grammar, vocabulary plays a crucial role in enhancing students' writing skills. As a result, when offering written feedback on their classmates' writing, students tend to focus heavily on vocabulary. This is evident from the fact that all students identified errors and used symbols to highlight them. However, after identifying the errors, not all students suggested ways to rectify them. Only 38% of the students offered suggestions, while 62% did not. Figure 3 illustrates this trend quite clearly.
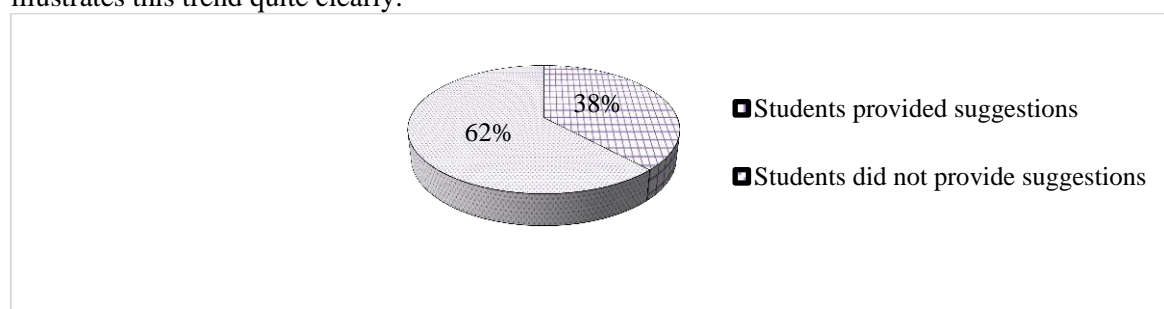
Figure 3. *The percentage of students who provided suggestions for the vocabulary mistakes*

Of all the vocabulary mistakes in writing, the most mistakes that students made were those related to word form, word order, word choice. Therefore, only these kinds of mistakes were examined more closely to see whether the feedback actually helped students improve their use of vocabulary in writing or not.

Table 4. *Students' giving feedback on vocabulary*

Types of vocabulary mistakes	Total number of mistakes indicated	The number of the correct suggestions	The number of incorrect suggestions
Word order	13	1	1
Word choice	40	17	3
Word form	16	2	2

According to table 4, there were totally 69 indicated mistakes of the four types. However, the mistakes indicated in each type had different percentage. The highest percentage belonged to the mistakes related to the word choice (58%). The percentage of mistakes related to word form was 23% and the rest was the word order (19%).

**Table 5.** *Students' giving feedback on vocabulary after receiving peer feedback*

Types of vocabulary mistakes	The number of mistakes in the first drafts	The number of mistakes in the second drafts
Word order	13	10
Word choice	40	22
Word form	18	7

Based on the information table 5 provided, it appeared that among the 71 vocabulary mistakes corrected in the second drafts, 13 were related to word order, 18 were related to word form, and 40 were related to word choice. The highest percentage of correctly changed mistakes was related

to word order (77%), followed by word choice (55%), and the lowest percentage was related to word form (39%).

3.1.4. Feedback on mechanic use

Overall, this was the easiest part and did not require much suggestion from the teacher. The percentages of Students did not provide suggestions made up only 30%, while the percentages of Students provided suggestions made up 70%. This was shown very clearly in figure 4.
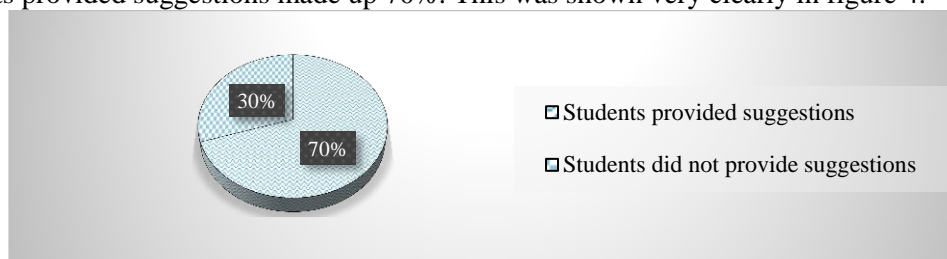
Figure 4. *The percentage of students who provided suggestions for the mechanic use mistakes*

Of all the mechanic use mistakes in writing, the most mistakes that students made were those related to capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Therefore, only these kinds of mistakes were examined more closely to see whether the feedback actually helped students improve their use of mechanic use in writing or not.

Table 6. *Students' giving feedback on mechanic use*

Types of mechanic use mistakes	Total number of mistakes indicated	The number of the correct suggestions	The number of incorrect suggestions
Capitalization	17	8	2
Punctuation	50	30	1
Spelling	25	15	8

Table 6 showed that there are 92 mistakes in the three types of mechanic use. However, in those errors there are quite obvious differences, especially punctuation errors. The highest percentage means the student with the most mistakes was a capitalization error with 50 errors. In second place was spelling with 25 errors, less than half the capitalization errors. Those 17 errors were capitalization, which has the lowest number of errors out of these three categories.

Table 7. *Students' giving feedback on mechanic use after receiving peer feedback*

Types of mechanic use mistakes	The number of mistakes in the first drafts	The number of mistakes in the second drafts
Capitalization	17	3
Punctuation	50	12
Spelling	25	8

The results of table 7 suggested that the students were able to improve their writing mechanics (such as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization) after receiving peer feedback. The highest number of errors in the first draft was related to punctuation (54%), but the percentage of errors in this aspect decreased significantly in the second draft (24%).

3.2. Findings from the questionnaire

3.2.1. The student's cognitive viewpoints toward using peer feedback in writing lessons

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of 4 items which were about students' cognitive viewpoints on the benefits of peer feedback in writing learning after the intervention. The students were required to respond to four statements. The students' responses and the results of the statistical analysis were presented below:

The results of the items from 1 to 4 were visualized in more detail by figure 5 presenting the degree of agreeing or disagreeing.

In brief, students' points of view on using peer feedback in writing lessons were positive. The exposure to this method brought numerous benefits for students; improving students' ability in writing performance, supplying students with opportunities to approach and master writing skills; expanding students' knowledge about how to write perfect writing.
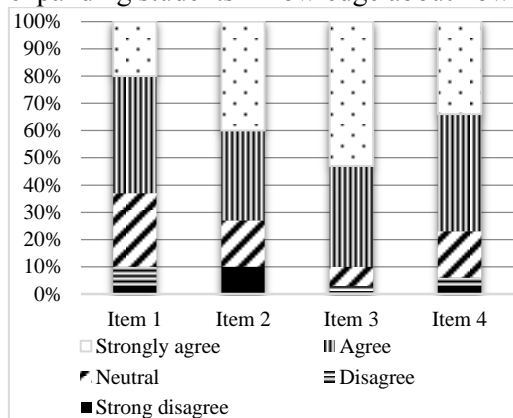
Figure 5. *The cognitive viewpoints of students towards the benefits of peer feedback*
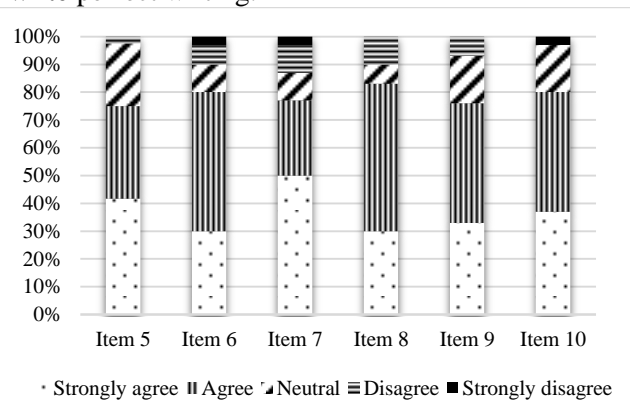
Figure 6. *The feelings of students toward the use of peer feedback*

3.2.2. The students' feelings toward peer feedback

The second part of the questionnaire aimed to explore the feelings of the students about using peer feedback in their writing skill. The students were required to respond to six statements. The responses and the results of the statistical analysis were presented in detail in this part.

The results of the items from 5 to 10 were demonstrated visually in Figure 6 presenting the degree of agreeing or disagreeing.

As seen from the table 6, 90% of the student's enjoyment in writing lessons with peer feedback supplied by the teacher. Only one student participating in the survey disagreed with this idea. 80% of the participants felt more comfortable in writing lesson by exchanging ideas and knowing their peer's writing proficiency. However, 3 out of 30 participants disapproved of this statement. The idea that peer feedback used made the class more interesting and effective was supported by 23 participants (accounting for 77% of the students). There was no efficient outcome with 13% of the students in the survey. However, through peer feedback supplied by the teacher, 83% of the students felt that using exposure to this method made them more enthusiastic in the writing class. 3 out of 30 students did not have this feeling. The number of participants who approved the idea that they became more creative and self-motivated after learning writing skill with peer feedback was 23 out of 30, which occupied 76%. Finally, 80% of the students (43% agreed and 37% strongly agreed respectively) felt confident when asked to make suggestions about peer's work. There was one student (accounting for 3%) disapproving of the idea of peer feedback.

3.2.3. The students' learning behaviors after using peer feedback in writing lessons

Part three of the questionnaires consisted of 2 items which were about students' behaviour towards the opportunities for practice. The results of the items from 1 to 2 were visually demonstrated in figure 7 presenting the degree of agreeing or disagreeing.

It can be concluded that most of the students showed positive attitudes, high perception and good behaviour towards using peer feedback in writing lessons. The majority of them thought that they became more creative and self- motivated after learning writing skill with this method.
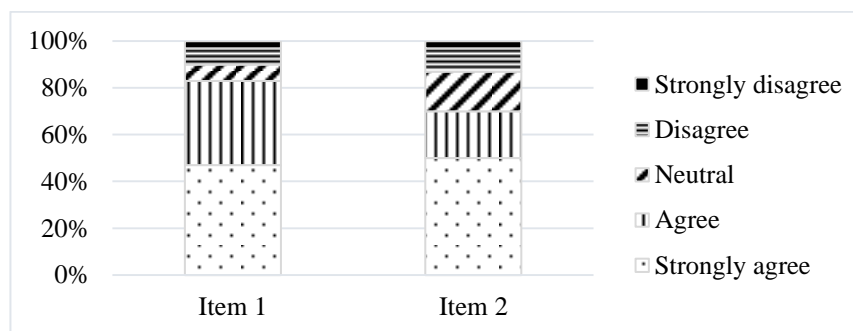
Figure 7. *The students' behaviour toward the use of peer feedback*

4. Conclusion

From analyzing all findings, it could be concluded, the use of peer feedback enhanced the student's writing performance. Also, a large number of the students showed satisfaction with the application of peer feedback method and felt more motivated in fulfilling writing tasks. These findings suggested that the method could be taught, which would help high school students improve their writing performance.

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