Effects of Structured Peer Feedback on Secondary School Students' Text Revision

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of structured peer feedback on students' text revision. Participants in this study were trained to provide feedback to their peers' essay drafts in the classroom before they were required to provide feedback to their peers. The participants of this study were 20 secondary school students in an intact English language class from an international school. The study revealed that the participants were able to provide feedback to their peers and participants who received the feedback were able to make necessary changes to their essay drafts. However, most of the feedback that was provided by participants focused on local revisions such as punctuations, spelling and vocabulary rather than global revision such as coherence and cohesion. The study also investigated the perception of the participants towards peer feedback. The study revealed that participants had a positive attitude towards providing feedback as well as receiving feedback from peers.

KEYWORDS: peer feedback, structured feedback, text revision, local revision, global revision

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Introduction

One of the common forms of alternative assessments that promote active student involvement is peer assessment. Peer assessment is a form of alternative assessment that requires learners to provide feedback to their peers in the form of grades, comments, corrections or suggestions with the aim to improve learners' performance on a task that learners have been assigned to by a teacher or instructor (Falchikov, 2007). Peer assessment allows learners to judge their peers by making practical judgements to the degree of which their peers have mastered a subject matter (Falchikov, 2007). As such, peer assessment is a form of an alternative assessment that assists students to understand not only the subject matter but also how the subject matter is assessed and evaluated by the respective instructors of a certain subject. Having such opportunities to assess and evaluate by either grading or providing feedback to their peers help learners to gain better understanding of the subject matter and reflect upon their own respective work. In other words, playing the assessor and assessee role in peer assessment helps students to perform better on the task.

Investigating how students can benefit from peer feedback and utilizing it is an important aspect of peer assessment. Berg (1999) and Min (2005) note that peer feedback has been beneficial to learners at the tertiary level when they were in the process of learning how to write and revise their piece of writing. Feedback received from peers in the form of grades, comments, corrections and suggestions play an important role in assisting students to re-evaluate their piece of writing and thus use the feedback received to improve their text. Topping (1998) notes that feedback that is received from their peers can be used to identify missing knowledge and thus help students to revise and improve on their work. Liu and Lie (2013) assert that it is still unknown as to why learners who are involved in peer feedback activities fail to assimilate feedback received from their peers. Liu and Lie (2013) note that this could either be because they do not agree with the feedback they received from their peers or there is a possibility that learners fail to comprehend the feedback they receive from their peers. Thus, this calls for more in-depth studies to be carried out to investigate how feedback is utilized by students to enhance students' performance in text revision.

Statement of the problem
Research studies that have been carried have revealed that peer feedback does benefit students in improving their text revision and helping them to improve their ability in providing more meaningful feedback to their peers (Berg, 1999, Min, 2005, 2006). However, most studies that have been carried out have focused on students at the tertiary level and very little is known about how this form of assessment could be utilized at a secondary school level (Tsui & Ng, 2000). Furthermore, most studies carried out on peer assessment have revealed that peer feedback does impact students' performance on a task that has been assigned; however very little is known on how students actually utilize the feedback received from their peers to improve their performance on a writing task. Liou and Peng (2009) note that the rate of acceptance of peer feedback might be low when peers engage themselves in non-revision-oriented activities such as having a conversation with other peers rather than providing revision-oriented feedback such as comments, suggestions and clarifications. Thus, although most studies that have been carried out have revealed the benefits of peer feedback in writing (Chandler, 2003; Tsui & Ng, 2000) little is known how a structured peer feedback activity with explicit peer feedback instructions is able to impact students' text revision when feedback is provided to peers on a writing task.

Purpose and research questions of the study

This research study seeks to investigate how a structured peer feedback activity with explicit instructions is able to impact students' text revision. In a recent study, Yang and Meng (2013) assert that peer feedback training and instructions have seldom been provided in peer assessment activities. Thus, this study is designed to investigate how structured peer feedback with explicit instructions impacts students' text revision when they provide feedback to their peers. This study also seeks to investigate secondary school students' perception towards peer feedback as many of the studies that have been carried out in the past have focused on students at the tertiary level of education (Choi, 2013; Min, 2006; Yang & Meng, 2013). The research questions of the study are as follows:

1. How does a structured peer feedback activity influence the students' text revision?
2. How do the secondary school students perceive peer feedback in writing?

Peer feedback and text revision

Peer feedback is any form of corrections, opinions, suggestions or grades that is received from peers in order to enhance students' performance on a task they have been assigned to (Falchikov, 2007). Studies that have been carried out reveal that by providing training to learners, they are able to provide more meaningful feedback to their peers whereby learners are able to utilise the feedback received and make necessary amendments to their essays (Min, 2005, 2006; Yang & Meng, 2013). Experimental studies that have been carried out reveal that groups of learners that were coached to provide feedback always outperformed groups that did not receive any training to provide feedback (Berg, 1999; Stanley, 1992; Zhu, 1995). Studies that have been carried out have also revealed that learners who played the role of an assessor and assessee were able to provide more meaningful feedback and make necessary changes to their essays as compared to learners who only played the role of assessor (Kim, 2009). However, some studies have revealed peer feedback should not be used as a formal assessment as it evoked emotions in learners when they are required to provide feedback (Nilson, 2003). Studies that investigated teachers' role in peer feedback activities reveal that teachers should not intervene by over-riding comments provided by learners as this demotivated learners from engaging in peer feedback activities (Hyland, 2000). However, some studies have revealed that peer feedback is ineffective as learners are only able to provide feedback in regard to surface level of a text and are incapable of providing feedback pertaining to semantics of a text. Consequently, peer feedback often contributed only marginal difference to writing (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Leki, 1990).

Methodology

Population and sampling

A non-probability sampling technique was employed in this research study in which the researcher used convenience sampling method. All 20 secondary school students that participated in this study were students in the researcher's English class in which the researcher was also their English teacher. The 20 secondary school students in the English class who participated in this study had earlier sat for an English placement test administered by the school to determine their proficiency in the English language. These 20 students who obtained a score ranging from 60% to 75% were placed in the same class. Therefore, the participants deemed to be homogeneous in terms of their English proficiency level as they performed almost equally on the English placement test. The placement test that was administered to the students by the school's examination department is a standardized test that is used by all international schools that offer the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) syllabus. Thus, the placement test that was administered to the students is deemed to be both valid and reliable.

Data collection and procedure

The structured peer feedback activity for this research study consisted of a narrative writing task and a narrative writing marking guide. The narrative writing task was a question extracted from the IGCSE international examination by the University of Cambridge entitled "The Hidden Box". Each student was required to complete the first draft of the essay before submitting to their peers to be assessed. The narrative marking guide which was provided to the students served as a guide and checklist while the students assessed and provided feedback to their peers. The narrative marking guide was adapted from the National Assessment Program (NAP) official website. The marking guide that was obtained from the NAP official website was selected because it was deemed to be both valid and reliable to assess students in Year 9. However, some changes were made to the narrative marking guide due to familiarity of the students towards the criteria in the narrative marking guide. The 20 secondary school students in an international school were each given a copy of the narrative essay marking guide in which they were provided with explicit verbal instructions in the classroom. Using this particular marking guide, the researcher who was also the English teacher explained the marking guide thoroughly and provided examples in the classroom during English lessons in which participants had a chance to seek clarifications when they faced any difficulties in using the marking guide.

The training on using the narrative marking guide was conducted for five days in the classroom. Next, the participants were assigned a writing task in which they were required to complete the first draft in one hour as a classroom practice and submit it via email to their English teacher. Then, each essay draft was randomly assigned to one participant; however, the identity of both the assessor and assessee was kept anonymous. The participants were given a duration of two days to provide comments, suggestions and grades to their classmate's first draft. The drafts were uploaded on Schoology, a learning management system, which allowed students to access the drafts only in the classroom during the English lesson. This way, students were unable to provide feedback outside of the classroom. Once the essays had been assessed, it was returned to the participants by the English language teacher and the participants were required to make amendments before resubmitting to the teacher before it was reassigned to the same participant to be reassessed. This procedure was repeated twice and the students were required to complete two drafts and provide feedback twice. Participants referred to the narrative essay marking guide while providing corrective feedback to their classmates. Participants were required to highlight and insert their comments using Microsoft Word feature in which comments were written on the right side of the essay. Figure 1 below illustrates how participants were required to provide feedback to their peers based on the marking guide.

Figure 1 Excerpt of an essay draft and feedback provided by a participant

Finally, a five-point Likert scale questionnaire (see Appendix A) was administered to the participants to investigate their perception towards peer feedback in writing. The 20 items on the questionnaire were categorized into four main areas which were the importance of drafting an essay, the process of reading peer's essay, the process of responding to peer's drafts and providing feedback, and the value of peer feedback on the ongoing process of text revision.

Data analysis

For the first research question, the first and second essay drafts were analysed to investigate how feedback provided by peers affected the second drafts written by the participants, and how participants made necessary changes based on the feedback they had received. In this study, two types of text revision were identified which included local revision and global revision. As noted by Ramage, Bean and Johnson (2011), local revision refers to changes that are made at sentence level and any such changes will only affect one or two sentences; while global revision refers to changes that affect text organization, clarity and purpose. In this particular study, the five criteria in the narrative marking guide (see Appendix B) (*Sentence structure, Punctuation and Mechanics, Vocabulary, Content, Paragraphing*) were classified into the two types of revision. Global revision included feedback received on *Content* and *Paragraphing* while local revision included feedback received on *Sentence structure, Punctuation and Mechanics,* and *Vocabulary.* The first and second drafts of the essay were analysed to investigate how participants made necessary changes to their second draft. Apart from that, the frequency of successful adaptation of the feedback was also stated, for instance, the number of participants who successfully made necessary changes on *Punctuation and Mechanics* after receiving feedback from their peers. For the second research question, a five-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered to the participants. The numeric scores that were obtained from the Likert scale questionnaire was analysed for mean scores and standard deviation to explain participants' perception toward peer feedback.

Results

Impact of peer feedback on students' text revision

This study investigated the impact of the feedback on participants' text revision when they worked on their second draft. As mentioned earlier, the five criteria in the marking guide were categorised into two types of revision known as local and global text revision. Table 1 below provides a brief summary on the types of errors that were detected by the participants while providing feedback to their peers and the number of participants who managed to make necessary changes based on the feedback they received from their peers. Table 1 also shows the types of errors that were detected by the participants while assessing their peer's first draft and it includes the number of participants who committed such errors as well as the number of participants who made the necessary changes based on the feedback that they received.

Table 1
Summary of local and global errors detected and rectified by students

Local Revision			
Criteria	Types of Errors	Number of students who committed errors (errors detected by peers)	Number of students who successfully made necessary changes based on feedback in their second draft
Punctuations & Mechanics	Capitalization Errors	14	14
	Improper use of Comma	8	7
	Improper use of Full stop	10	10
	Improper use of Quotation Marks	2	1
Vocabulary	Spelling error	12	12
	Inappropriate Word Choice	14	14
Sentence Structure	Fragment error & Run-On Error	18	17
	Verb Tense Error	14	12
Global Revision			
Content	Cohesion & Coherence	-	-
	Complications/Resolutions	2	-
	Introduction/Body/ Conclusion	-	-
Paragraphing	Clumsy Transition	-	-
	Organization Paragraphs Too Short/Long	2	1

Local revision

As mentioned earlier, from the five criteria in the marking guide, three of the five criteria which included *Punctuations and Mechanics, Vocabulary* and *Sentence Structure* were categorised as local revision of the text. *Punctuations and Mechanics* in the narrative marking guide consisted of the improper use of comma, full stop, quotation marks, capitalization, semi colon, colon, improper use of exclamation mark and question mark. From the data that were obtained from the participants, 70%, or 14 out of 20 participants received feedback on errors in regards to errors in capitalization in their first draft. In the second draft however, all the participants who had initially made capitalization errors in their first draft successfully adapted the feedback they had received

and made the necessary changes to their second draft. Figure 2 below is an excerpt from Participant 001's (P001) first draft in which as can be seen, he received feedback pertaining to capitalization errors.
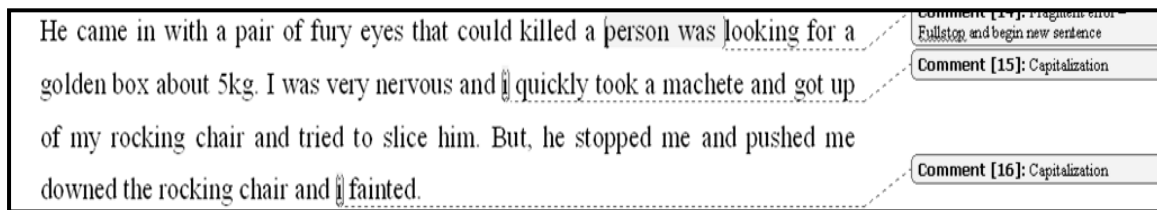

He came in with a pair of fury eyes that could killed a person was looking for a golden box about 5kg. I was very nervous and i quickly took a machete and got up of my rocking chair and tried to slice him. But, he stopped me and pushed me downed the rocking chair and i fainted.

Comment [14]: Fragment error – Fullstop and begin new sentence
Comment [15]: Capitalization
Comment [16]: Capitalization

Figure 2 Capitalization errors

The pronoun 'I' in P001's second draft was successfully capitalized by P001 when he wrote his second draft. After receiving feedback from his peer on his first draft, P001 successfully made the necessary corrections in his second draft which can be seen in Figure 3.
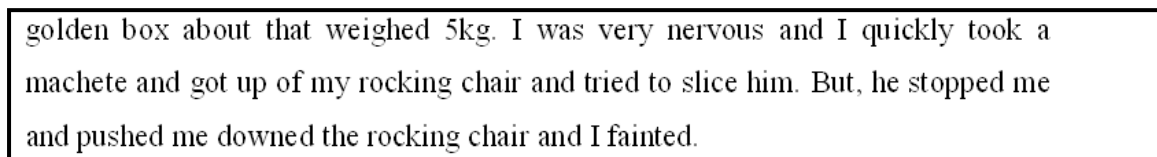

golden box about that weighed 5kg. I was very nervous and I quickly took a machete and got up of my rocking chair and tried to slice him. But, he stopped me and pushed me downed the rocking chair and I fainted.

Figure 3 Capitalizations errors rectified

Another example of capitalization error was also evident in P004's first draft. Upon receiving the feedback from her peer, she made the necessary changes to her second draft. Figure 4 below shows the errors that she made in her first draft and Figure 5 shows that she had made necessary changes to her second draft.
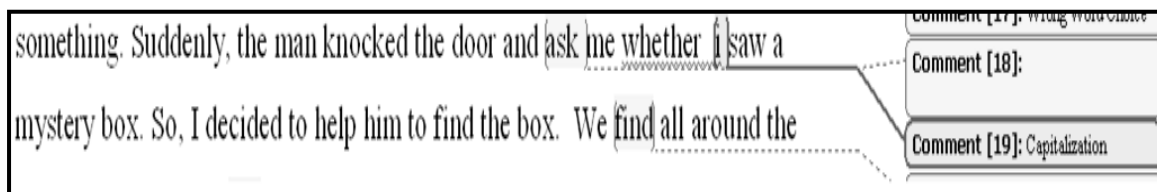

something. Suddenly, the man knocked the door and ask me whether i saw a mystery box. So, I decided to help him to find the box. We find all around the

Comment [17]: Wrong word choice
Comment [18]:
Comment [19]: Capitalization

Figure 4 Capitalization error

As mentioned earlier, P004 successfully capitalized the pronoun 'I' in her second draft upon receiving feedback on her first draft from her peer.

Out of the blue, I saw a man who looked very nervous and it seems like he wanted to find something. Suddenly, the man knocked the door and asked me whether I saw a mystery box. So, I decided to help him to find the box. We searched all
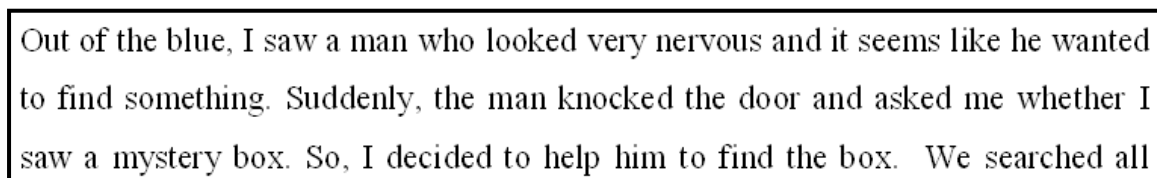
Figure 5 Capitalization error rectified

Apart from capitalization error, another common error among the participants was the misuse of comma or in some cases, the comma was missing in a sentence. By analysing the first draft, it was found that eight out of 20 participants received feedback pertaining to commas in their first draft. Seven participants successfully managed to make necessary changes to their second draft. In Figure 6 below, P009 did not use a comma to separate the independent and dependent clause in a complex sentence.

> I opened the iron gate and walked as softly as I could up the weed-tufted gravel drive and I was sitting on a chair. When I walked in I see a man in my house. He was trying to find a box around my house.

Comment [11]: Review this sentence
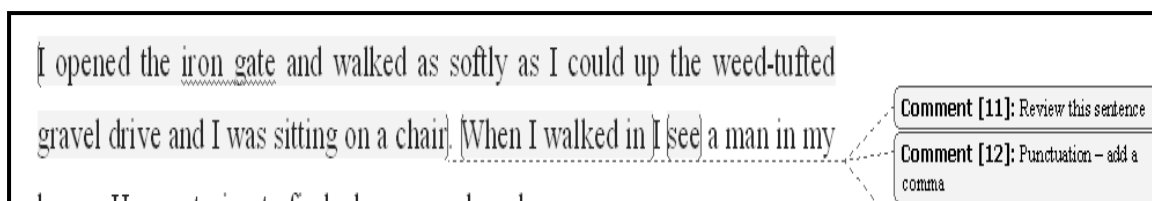
Comment [12]: Punctuation – add a comma

Figure 6 Comma error

Upon receiving the feedback from her peer, P009 made the necessary changes in her second draft. Her changes in her second draft can be seen in Figure 7 below.

> I walked as softly as I could up the weed-tufted gravel drive. I entered into the house and I sat on a chair. When I walked in, I saw a man in my house. He was trying to find a box around my house.
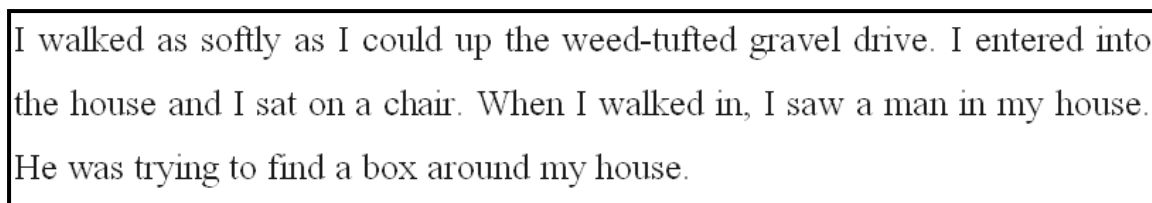
Figure 7 Comma error rectified

Some of the participants, who wrote their first draft, either misused the full stop or at times did not use a full stop to mark the end of the sentence. In Figure 8 below, P017 did not use a full stop to mark the end of the sentence and the error was detected by her peer while providing feedback to her.

> I sat there looking out the window aimlessly. The spider web at the corner caught my attention as I noticed the spider had enlarged its territory to capture its prey I noticed how it would catch its prey and slowly torture it
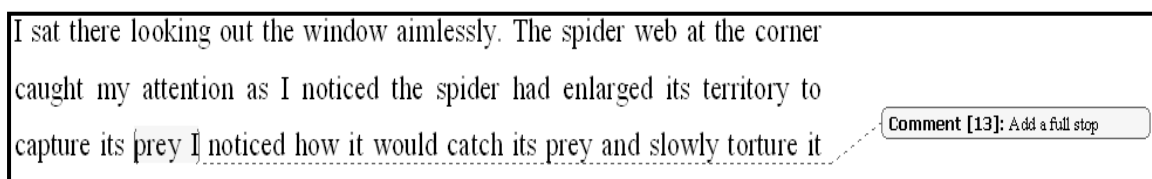
Comment [13]: Add a full stop

Figure 8 Full-stop error

Upon revising her second draft, P017 managed to make use of the feedback and rectified the error by using a full stop to mark the end of a sentence. The change can be seen in Figure 9 below.

> I sat there looking out the window aimlessly. The spider web at the corner caught my attention as I noticed the spider had enlarged its territory to capture its prey. I noticed how it would catch its prey and slowly torture it
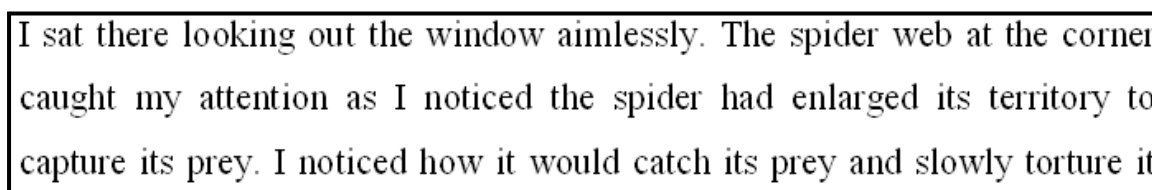
Figure 9 Full-stop error rectified

Apart from errors in *Punctuations and Mechanics*, participants also managed to detect and rectify errors pertaining to *Vocabulary*. In P013's first draft, he made an inappropriate word selection error and this error can be seen in Figure 10 below.

> short about 5 ft high and he has small hands but a very big stomach .So he walk towards the porch of the house . The door of the house was not oiled for many years so when he entered the door made a creaking sound so annoying that it was more annoying than a baby crying. So when he entered
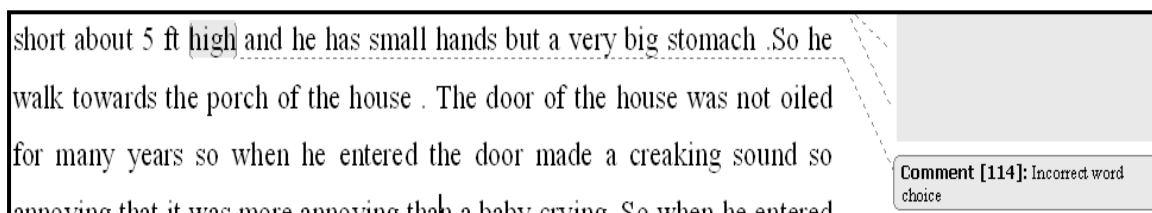
Comment [114]: Incorrect word choice

Figure 10 Inappropriate word choice

In P013's second draft, he managed to find an appropriate word to describe the human height. Instead of using the word 'high' he managed to change it to 'tall' to describe someone's height. The change made in his second draft can be seen in Figure 11 below.

was at the front gate of the house. He was about 5 feet tall and he had small hands but a very big stomach. So he walked towards the porch of the house.

Figure 11 Inappropriate word choice rectified

Another criterion that was categorized as local revision was *Sentence Structure*. This type of errors were also detected and rectified by participants in this study successfully. In P007's first draft, she committed a fragment error (Figure 12) in which she put a full stop immediately after a dependent clause in which the sentence is incomplete.

attention, it moves slowly from a corner to another. After the spider went into a

hole at the paint peeling wall. I look outside the room from a small dirty window, I

Comment [11]: Verb Tense – Simple Past

Comment [12]: Fragment error – Complete this sentence

Figure 12 Fragment error

In her second draft, P007 managed to make the necessary change to her draft in which she rectified the error by adding a comma and combining a dependent clause and independent clause to form a complete sentence. Her change can be seen in Figure 13.

It moved slowly from a corner to another. After the spider went into a hole at the paint peeling wall, I looked outside the room from a small dirty window. I saw my

Figure 13 Fragment error rectified

Global revision

From the narrative marking guide, two of the five criteria were categorized as global revisions. These two included *Content* and *Paragraphing*. Participants in this study did not manage to detect and rectify many errors related to global revision as compared to local revision. However, there were some participants who managed to detect and provided suggestions to their peers to make necessary changes to their second draft. One example can be seen here when one participant suggested that P007 should organize her essay in multiple paragraphs rather than writing the whole draft in one paragraph. P007's first draft is shown in Figure 14.

I was sitting at the corner of the room and a spider on the wall caught my attention, it moves slowly from a corner to another. After the spider went into a hole at the paint peeling wall. I look outside the room from a small dirty window, I saw my disheveled neglected garden with mossy stepping stone path and many butterflies flying around. The wooden beams were shaking, the dirt are all falling down. There was a creacking sound from the floorboard, is a ancient floorboard and it is rotten. The old oak door started making some annoying sounds. Those gecko on the wall get scare and run away with only the tail left. The black and white tiled kitchen floor, the dead cockroach is lying all around the floor. When I open the broken cupboard and many mice ran out. I saw a strong, muscular man searching for something. He looks like a homeless person and his eyes were all red and his eye bag is as big as a school bag. He look at me scarily like he is gonna eat me. Then he saw the box located in the old fridge. The box is made of wood but the lock is made of gold. The box is as big as a dictionary but is much lighter than that. He took the box quickly and ran out.

Comment [11]: Verb Tense – Simple Past

Comment [12]: Fragment error – Complete this sentence

Comment [13]: Continue this sentence

Comment [14]: Spelling error

Comment [15]: Plural Noun

Comment [16]: Review this sentence – sentence is incomplete

Comment [17]: No conjunction needed in this sentence

Comment [18]: Verb Tense – Simple Past

Comment [19]: Spelling error

Comment [110]: Verb Tense – Simple Past

Comment [111]: Verb Tense – Simple Past

Comments:

1. Add more complications and resolution to your story
2. Please use paragraphs
3. Narrative essay uses Simple Past Tense

Figure 14 Suggestions to improve paragraphing

P007 made changes to her second draft. However, she organized her essay into two paragraphs and her transition from one paragraph to the other was inappropriate and clumsy. Her second draft is shown below in Figure 15

I was sitting at the corner of the room and a spider on the wall caught my attention. It moved slowly from a corner to another. After the spider went into a hole at the paint peeling wall, I looked outside the room from a small dirty window. I saw my disheveled neglected garden with mossy stepping stone path and many butterflies flying around. The wooden beams were shaking, the dirt are all falling down. The old oak door started making some annoying sounds. Those geckos on the wall get scared and run away with only the tail left. The black and white tiled kitchen floor had not been clean for several years and the dead cockroaches were lying all around the floor. When I opened the broken cupboard many mice ran out. Suddenly I heard a cracking sound from the floorboard, it was an ancient floorboard and it was rotten.

To my surprise, I saw a strong, muscular man searching for something. He looked like a homeless person and his eyes were all red and his eye bag is as big as a school bag. He looked at me scarily like he is going to eat me. Then he saw the box located in the old fridge. The box was made of wood but the lock was made of gold. The box is as big as a dictionary but is much lighter than that. He took the box quickly and ran out.

Figure 15 Inappropriate paragraphing

Although feedback was provided to P007 to set her essay into multiple paragraphs, she did not incorporate the feedback and make the necessary changes to her second draft. The result of this study reveals that participants were unable to provide accurate feedback to their peers on global revision in which participants were unable to make necessary changes to their second draft when they had error pertaining to global errors. As noted by Topping (1998), it is necessary to provide training to students before requiring them to engage themselves in peer feedback activities. Despite the training of the narrative marking guide, it was found that participants did not manage to provide feedback pertaining to global revision. Several factors could have caused this, such as, level of proficiency of the participants or the insufficient amount of time spent on training the participants. As the researcher/teacher had limited hours to spend with the participants, a more intensive training could have helped them to provide feedback on global revision to their peers.

However, participants in this study managed to detect and rectify errors pertaining to local revision. This could be due to the fact that participants were able to understand the narrative marking guide and the teachers' explanation in the classroom as local revision errors were easily noticeable. This was also due to the fact that the narrative marking guide had very detailed and specific information pertaining to local revision. However, the narrative marking guide did not have much information as to how to detect and rectify global errors in the essay. As opposed to Min's (2006) study, an extensive training program during class hours and after class hours helped college students to improve their feedback quantity and quality as they were fully equipped with all the necessary skills to provide feedback to their peers. However, in this particular study, the

limited time spent on training the participants did not allow participants to provide sufficient feedback pertaining to global revision.

Perception towards peer feedback

The 20 items on the questionnaire were categorized into four main areas which were the importance of drafting an essay, the process of reading peer's essay, the process of responding to peer's drafts and providing feedback, and the value of peer feedback on the ongoing process of text revision.

Importance of drafting essays

The first part of the questionnaire, (Items 1 to 3) measured participants' level of agreement towards the importance of writing several drafts. The results revealed that participants agreed that writing several drafts helped them to improve their essays and helped them to make their ideas clearer for the reader. However, for Item 3 on the questionnaire, when participants were asked if they would write several drafts on their own even when the teacher did not instruct them to do so, only eight participants agreed to this item. The reason behind this could be because participants do not see the benefit of writing several drafts that are not going to be assessed.

Process of reading peer's draft

The second part of the questionnaire in Section A (Items 4 to 7) measured participants level of agreement on the process of reading peer's draft. With a mean score of 4.4, majority of the participants agreed to the statement in which there were eight participants who strongly agreed to the statement. Strong level of agreement was also evident in Items 6 and 7 with a mean score of 4.0 and 4.1 respectively when participants were asked if reading peer's drafts actually helped them to gain new ideas on their own writing and if reading peer's drafts helped them to organize their own writing better. Majority of the participants agreed that by reading their peer's drafts they were able to get fresh ideas and to incorporate new styles in their own writing.

Process of responding to peer's drafts and providing feedback

In third part of the questionnaire in Section A (Items 9 to 13), participants answered items pertaining to the process of responding to their peer's drafts and providing feedback. The majority of the participants disagreed with the statement 'I prefer not to make comments on my classmates' writing'. This suggests that participants generally preferred to provide feedback to their peers and were in favour of assessing their peer's drafts. However, for Item 12, majority of the participants agreed that they would tell their peer if their peer had written something they liked. This suggests that participants were more likely to compliment their peers whenever they found out that their peers had written something exciting to be read. In regards to Item 11, it was evident that participants preferred not to provide negative feedback to their peers as opposed to Item 12 where they preferred to provide compliments to their peers. For Item 10, when participants responded to the statement 'It is difficult to find things to say about my classmates' writing' it was found that there were mixed responses ranging from those who strongly agreed to those who disagreed to the statement. With a standard deviation of 1.17, the mixed responses from participants could be due to the level of understanding on how to use the narrative marking guide as some participants were unsure as to how to provide feedback to their peers using the narrative marking guide. Responding to Item 13, there were mixed responses from the participants when they were responded to the statement 'I sometimes worry about hurting my classmates' feelings with my comments'. Responses to this statement saw mixed responses ranging from strongly disagree to agree in which the standard deviation was 1.1.

Value of peer feedback to the ongoing process of text revision
In the fourth part of the questionnaire in Section A (Items 8, 14 to 20), participants responded to the value of peer feedback on the ongoing process of text revision. Item 8 revealed that the majority of the participants had low level of confidence when they provided feedback to their peers as they disagreed that their peers found their feedback useful. However, Item 14 revealed that 17 participants were positive in receiving comments from their peers and were more than pleased in receiving feedback. Item 15 and 16 on the questionnaire revealed that participants agreed that their peers' feedback and comments helped them to revise their drafts and helped them to notice mistakes they had made in their initial drafts. On the other hand, with regards to Item 18 only eight participants agreed that they did not find their peers' comments and feedback useful all the time. Items 19 and 20 revealed that the majority of the participants agreed that their peers' feedback helped them to improve their organization and language of their writing.

Discussion

Students' generally had a positive perception towards peer feedback in this study in which the majority of the students welcomed the idea of providing and receiving feedback. This positive attitude can be linked to the structured peer feedback activity in which training was provided to participants by the teacher/researcher on how to use the narrative marking guide to provide feedback. The training of the participants that lasted for five days allowed them to learn more about the feedback activity and to practise providing feedback before they were required to provide the actual feedback to their peers. Similar findings were also found in Yang and Meng's (2013) study where they found out that the students had a generally positive attitude towards peer feedback as they were trained prior to providing feedback to their peers. In addition to this, Min's (2006) study also revealed similar findings whereby college students who were provided with extensive training both inside and outside of the classroom tended to view peer feedback positively as students were able to assimilate the feedback they received from their peers. One of the factors that led to the positive attitude towards peer feedback in this study was the training that was provided by the teacher. Another factor that led to the positive attitude towards peer feedback was due to the activity that was structured to be student-centred. The narrative marking guide that was adapted and later altered to be student-friendly played an important role as students were able to use it as a guideline while providing feedback to their peers. Students who received comments and suggestions did not doubt the accuracy as they were aware that their peers were using a guideline that was provided by the subject expert. Thus, this helped the students to gain confidence and at the same time viewed peer feedback positively.

Conclusion

This study reveals that peer feedback activity that is carried out at the secondary school level can be beneficial to both learners and teachers. This study also shows that with appropriate training and guideline to follow, learners at the secondary school level are able to provide meaningful feedback to their peers who later are able to assimilate the feedback to improve their essay drafts. The results of this study reveal that the participants are able to make sense of their peers' feedback and view the feedback positively due to the fact that the peer feedback activity was planned meticulously to assist students to provide meaningful feedback. However, more peer feedback activities should be carried out to help learners gain confidence and to master the art of assessing.

The research into peer feedback is an ongoing one. As most of these studies have focused on students at tertiary level, it is recommended that research be carried out on secondary school

students. From this study, it is evident that students at secondary school level have the capability to engage actively and provide meaningful feedback to their peers who can then make the necessary changes to their work. Thus, future research can be carried out to investigate the effects of extensive training provided to secondary school students when providing feedback to investigate if secondary school students are able to provide feedback in regards to local and global errors in writing. Apart from that, a comparison between teacher feedback and peer feedback study can be carried out at the secondary school level to investigate students' preference.

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Appendix A   **Perception towards Peer Feedback**

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

*Strongly Agree   Agree   Neither Agree nor Disagree   Disagree   Strongly
disagree*
   (5)   (4)   (3)   (2)   (1)

Age _____   Gender _____   Race_____

1	My writing improves if I write several drafts.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Revising my work helps make my ideas clearer for the reader.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I would write several drafts of an assignment even if the teacher didn't tell me to.	1	2	3	4	5
4	It's useful to read my classmates' work.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I would like to spend more time reviewing my classmates' work.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Reviewing other students' work helps me organize my own writing better.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Reviewing other students' work gives me ideas for my own writing.	1	2	3	4	5
8	My classmates probably found my comments useful when revising their work.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I would prefer not to make comments on my classmates' writing.	1	2	3	4	5
10	It is difficult to find things to say about my classmates' writing.	1	2	3	4	5
11	In my comments, I tell my classmate if I don't understand something they have written.	1	2	3	4	5
12	In my comments, I tell my classmate if I like something they have written.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I sometimes worry about hurting my classmate's feelings with my comments.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I enjoy receiving my classmates' comments on my writing.	1	2	3	4	5
15	My classmates' comments help me when I revise my writing.	1	2	3	4	5
16	In their comments, my classmates sometimes point out problems with my writing that I hadn't noticed.	1	2	3	4	5
17	It's not useful if my classmates only say good things about my writing.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I sometimes disagree with my classmate's comments about my writing.	1	2	3	4	5
19	My classmates' comments help me improve the organization of my writing.	1	2	3	4	5
20	My classmates' comments help me improve the language of my writing.	1	2	3	4	5

Khasminder, S. & Tan, B.H. (2016). *The English Teacher, 45*(3), 126 - 143.

Appendix B   **Narrative Essay Marking Guide**

Criteria	4	3	2	1	Tags
Content	Coherent, controlled and complete narrative, employing effective plot devices in an appropriate structure, and including an effective ending	Contains orientation, complication and resolution Detailed longer text may resolve one complication and lead into a new complication or layer a new complication onto an existing one rather than conclude	Minimal evidence of narrative structure, eg a story beginning only or a 'middle' with no orientation A recount of events with no complication	No evidence of any structural components of a time-sequenced text	Complication, resolution, climax, introduction, conclusion, coherence, cohesion,
Punctuations & Mechanics	Proper use of all necessary punctuations with no erros/missing punctuations.	Punctuation mistakes are rare and does not impede understanding of the text	Punctuation mistakes are frequent and impede understanding of the text at times.	Punctuations errors are very frequent and impede the understanding of the text.	Improper use of comma, fullstop, quotation marks, capitalization, semi colon, colon, improper use of exclamation mark and question mark
Vocabulary	A range of precise words and words groups and phrases used without spelling mistakes/errors. Language choice is well-matched with genre	Most words and phrases are well chosen. Very few spelling errors. Some incorrect usage of part of speech.	Consists of mostly simple words (verbs, adjectives etc). A number of spelling mistakes and incorrect usage of part of speech that impedes understanding	Spelling mistakes are frequent. Some simple words chosen are correct. Part of speech is often misused.	Incorret word choice, Spelling error, Incorrect Part of Speech, Incorreect use of noun, adjective, preposition, articles
Sentence Structure	All sentences are correct. Writing contains controlled and well-developed sentences that express precise meaning and are consistently effective.	Simple and compound sentences are correct Most complex sentences are correct Fragment error, run on error and Verb Form/Tense errors are rarely committed.	Most simple and compound sentences correct Some complex sentences are correct Fragment error, run on error and Verb Form/Tense errors are sometimes committed.	A number of simple sentences are correct. Fragments errors and Verb Tense error are frequent. Sentences are not well constructed and impedes reading	Fragment error, run on error, comma splice, Verb Form or Tense error

Khasminder, S. & Tan, B.H. (2016). *The English Teacher, 45*(3), 126 - 143.

Paragraphing	All paragraphs are focused on one idea or set of like ideas and enhance the narrative	Writing is organised into paragraphs that are mainly focused on a single idea or set of like ideas that assist the reader to digest chunks of text	The whole piece of writing is organized into one paragraph. Meaning in unclear and impedes understanding	Paragraphing is not used/ random breaks and chunks of words stringed together to form a paragraph.	Indentation, clumsy transition, inadequate information, paragraph with no sense of direction

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