



Effect of Peer Feedback on Paragraph Writing Performance among High School Students

Nguyen Huynh Trang

Dr., University of economics Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, trangnh@ueh.edu.vn

Khau Hoang Anh

Corresponding author, Tra Vinh University, Vietnam, anhkhau@tvu.edu.vn

Writing is one of the four important skills in learning a foreign language. However, most high school students find it uneasy to write due to many different both objective and subjective reasons. Finding effective solutions to this problem is always appreciated. This study, therefore, hopes to investigate whether peer feedback has any positive effect on this group's writing performance. In order to support this investigation, the authors attempted to deploy a writing teaching strategy using peer feedback as the main instrument to foster students' ability to write their paragraph. Two groups of the participants were recruited: 37 control students and 39 experimental ones in a high school in a rural district in Vietnam. After six weeks of intervention with this strategy, most students in the experimental group were awarded a better score than their counterparts in the control groups in general. The authors applied a 10 - scale rating rubric with three paragraph rating domains to measure their paragraph writing performance. Then, the authors also made an attempt to see the experimental students' attitudes towards peer feedback after their application in class and they were satisfied with it afterwards. It revealed that overall they showed positive attitudes towards peer feedback.

Keywords: high school students, writing, peer feedback, writing performance, paragraph writing domains, attitudes

INTRODUCTION

When applying peer feedback, the classroom teacher sees each individual's work as a process not a product and this process needs scaffolding by either their teacher or classmates. When this view of peer-feedback is fostered, more advantages can be seen. When working in pairs or groups, students feel more secured and therefore less tense. Working with others helps more timid learners who seem to be less involved in the whole class work to engage more in group discussion. Brown (2007) called peer-editing a stage when learners share things together. This is done to see if they have been successfully conveyed their intended meaning in their writing. This is the stage when learners step out of the world of own selves and bring the product to other for

Citation: Trang, N. H., & Anh, K. H. (2022). Effect of peer feedback on paragraph writing performance among high school students. *International Journal of Instruction*, 15(2), 189-206. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2022.15211a>

assessment in the hope that they can make some improvement of their next writing draft. He emphasized that peer editing is a two-way benefit activity when one gives the other his or her feedback and in return one receives other's comments on the writing draft.

Working with others helps individuals raise their awareness of team spirit and thus bringing about class unity, which reflects what Heerden and Bharuthram (2021) found in their study that when peers know each other well or fairly well, they feel comfortable and enjoy working with each other and tend to have open discussion. Furthermore, the foreign language classroom filled with group or pair discussion will help break the monotonous atmosphere in which a font-teacher is talking all the time. Peer feedback has been long said to facilitate teaching and learning, especially when the classroom teacher is able to optimize it in their classroom. According to Cassidy and Bailey (2018), learners who involved in peer feedback were able to be more responsible for their classmates' writing work; they learned more about their partner's content, organization and various grammatical points. Furthermore, "Student self-assessment most generally involves a wide variety of mechanisms and techniques through which students describe (i.e., assess) and possibly assign merit or worth to (i.e., evaluate) the qualities of their own learning processes and products" (Panadero et al., 2015, p.1). Peer feedback can be provided in different forms as found in Kusumaningrum et al. (2019) such as in-class peer feedback and small-group peer feedback provision forms which share equal value of quality. Peer feedback can be also implemented via electronic platforms instead of traditional peer feedback provision in classroom, which was found in Pham, et al. (2020) when they discovered that both types enhanced students' writing performance albeit E-commentary type surpassing the other. As seen from these works, peer feedback can be great of help in various situations and this, therefore, has driven the researchers to try using peer feedback in their own classes in a high school in the south of Vietnam. The aim of this investigation is to test if peer feedback continues to shed rosy light in the classroom. To facilitate this aim, two objectives are expected to reach. The first one is to test whether peer feedback assists high school students in improving their writing performance. The second objective is to explore if these students are satisfied with the application of peer feedback in class. The researchers in this current study hope the following two research questions help gain the objectives.

1. Does the training of using peer feedback help improve tenth grade students' paragraph writing performance?
2. What do they think about peer feedback providing in writing paragraphs?

Literature Review

Theoretical background

To form a framework for this current study, the researchers first use a paragraph structure proposed by Savage & Shafiei (2012); it contains a topic sentence and controlling idea. Mentioning things without specific information or explanation is not persuasive, so the topic sentence must contain some supporting ideas and these supporting ideas are included in the supporting sentences which all support a single idea in the topic sentence. A paragraph would not be complete, if it did not have the

concluding sentence which summarizes the idea in the topic sentence. Secondly, the study applies the peer-editing idea described by Oshima and Hogue (2007); they regarded peer editor “a classmate who reads your paper and helps you improve the content and organization. A peer editor’s job is to read, ask questions, and comment on what’s good and on what might be changed or made clearer” (pp. 18-19). Then, in order to apply scores and ways of providing comments given during peer feedback, the study also utilizes the idea of Peterson (2013). He said peer feedback on writing helps develop students’ self-assessment abilities through providing opportunities to learn and apply scoring criteria alongside helpful information to guide revisions for later improvement of a student’s writing. This idea also mentioned the role of the classroom teacher and he added that the teacher could do modelling and give examples to ensure effectiveness of a feedback activity. Furthermore, Westwood (2008) advised the classroom teacher has to provide appropriate modelling and demonstration so his or her students can mimic.

Finally, as this study provides the feedback training for the students, the researchers also take the ideas of Yu & Lee (2016); Rollinson (2005); Westwood (2008) and Kroll (2001) to guide the training. They said the classroom teacher needs to carefully design the peer feedback procedure, provide students with sufficient training, and adjust the training procedure according to their own teaching contexts. They also suggested using peer feedback as to collaborate, to help make the next draft better than the previous and therefore the classroom teacher should let the groups fairly free to write their own feedback. In terms of providing feedback, feedback provider has to give constructive comments which are specific. Regarding the training strategy, students themselves must be more efficient in their approach to learning. Thus, the classroom teacher has to teach students how to learn it.

Related studies

Elfiyanto and Fukazawa (2021) attempted to explore which type of feedback (peer feedback, teacher feedback or self-feedback) was likely to affect 162 senior high school students the most in two different schools in Indonesia and Japan and this number was divided into three groups to receive three different sources of feedback. To see if any improvement was seen, the authors conducted the pretest for the platform of comparison with the posttest writing performance. The results showed that corrective feedback given by peers improved Indonesian students’ writing performance while Japanese students benefited most from their teacher’s corrective feedback.

Kusumaningrum, et al. (2019) employed two types of feedback (in-class peer feedback and small group feedback) to see if 55 EFL students’ writing performance was enhanced. It revealed that both types of feedback helped these students level up their writing ability. However, the two types of peer feedback showed no significant difference in producing an effective piece of writing. They concluded these types of feedback in this context showed no disparity in empowering students’ writing.

Kuyyogsuy (2019) made an investigation of 21 third-year English majors in a university writing class for approximately 11 weeks in Thailand. Their English was assumed to be sufficient to provide feedback to their friends’ papers. She attempted to see if any effects

that peer feedback brought about. She used the writing pretest and post test to test students on mechanics, language use, vocabulary, organization and content. The applied criteria were “very poor, fair to poor, good to average, and very good to excellent. They were to write a narrative paragraph about “an interesting day the following summer” of approximately 180-200 words in one and a half hour with a dictionary in the exam. Furthermore, they were provided with written reflection worksheets to reflect upon using peer feedback. She also offered the participants the training sessions in the first three weeks of the writing course. The peer feedback training was divided into three stages: modelling, exploring and consciousness-raising. The result showed that students made progress in their writing ability by reducing the mistakes on each kind of error.

Schunn and WU (2019) developed an idea of the Persuasive Zone of Competence among different students with different levels of English proficiency and showed that their feedback were persuasive and they were able to address the performance problems among their peers. Their idea was also connected with Vygotsky’s theoretical construct of the ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), meaning “the difference between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 15). Based on this finding, more capable classmates can be of help if they are encouraged by their classroom teacher to assist their weaker friends in writing.

Huisman et al. (2018) did a study on peer feedback on academic writing with 83 undergraduate students who had either the role of peer feedback receivers or peer feedback providers about an authentic academic task. They were trained to look for certain aspects like content, structure and style of an essay. These participants had to either provide or receive peer feedback in the forms of analysis, evaluation, explanation and revision. It revealed that their final essays, which was the revision of the first ones experienced improvement. The form of explanatory peer comments was seen as the most useful tool in giving feedback and most preferred by feedback receivers since these comments could help better their papers in the revision process.

Yu and Hu (2017, p.186) found many interesting opinions of peer feedback in their study as follows:

One student said: It’s always better to give than to receive. Reviewing others’ work can help me reflect on my own writing and my ways of drafting English essays. I enjoyed the reviewing process a lot as I could really learn from my classmates.

However, not all the participants agreed with this. One student said like this.

To be honest, I am not interested in peer feedback at all. I did this mainly because this was a task required by the writing teacher. I don’t have any expectation. You know, it’s quite difficult for students to provide really meaningful and useful comments and suggestions. Most of the feedback focuses on grammar. From this result, the classroom teacher should clearly set the goal for peer feedback activities. Some of the students in the study did not show their preference in peer feedback as they did not what they should comment on or they just cannot do so.

In contrast to Yu and Hu (2017, p.186), Yu & Lee (2016) conducted a study on 41 students and found that low language proficiency students were able to give many comments to their peers' texts in terms of form, content, organization and others related to their writing. Then the majority of them held respect for their friends' comments and led to draft revision afterward. Regarding factors contributing to the success of peer feedback, many of low language proficiency students revealed that thanks to the use of L1 (mother tongue), they could do the task well. Therefore, this study can be a good suggestion for homogeneous students who speak the same first language and need to use their mother tongue to discuss for improving their drafts. This finding can be seen as evidence that low language proficiency can still give as many comments as they can if they receive careful instruction from their teacher.

Moore and Teather (2013) conducted a study on engaging students in peer review: feedback as learning. They found in their first survey about students' prior experience about peer review that "Students liked the opportunity to work collaboratively with others, obtain different perspectives on their work; get new ideas from others, receive constructive feedback, and work with people in a similar position to them" (p. 202). However, many of them hated their work to be marked by their friends and nothing else besides marks. Their result also disclosed that two thirds of the participants saw peer review as a very useful activity and one third to be a fairly useful activity. They were content that peer feedback is constructive. The students, furthermore, confessed that they had a difficult time during giving peer feedback because they had to identify areas needed improving, write comments, use their limited knowledge to judge and run with time while attempting to find mistakes. For the second survey about students' experience about peer feedback in this unit, they found that all the participants found it very useful or useful. The participants even worked harder than normal work both creating their own work and giving feedback.

Wakabayashi (2013) made an investigation of 51 university writing students who were recruited to either review their own texts or review their peers' texts. Better students were assigned to review their own texts while lower English proficiency students reviewed peers' texts. Both groups were provided with the reviewing worksheet to give detailed feedback on texts. The results showed that reviewing their own texts have better scores than those reviewing their peers' texts. However, according to the questionnaire survey, the majority of students in this study prefer to have a standard type feedback where they can exchange comments, especially in the written form.

Lin & Chien (2009) conducted a study on "An Investigation into Effectiveness of Peer Feedback". The participants in their study recruited sixteen English-majored students who volunteered in the survey. The treatment lasted for six weeks which were divided into four sessions. In the first two weeks, the participants were trained on how to develop a number of writing strategies and skills. In the second session, they were guided to do an exercise on writing about the assigned topic related to their course. Simultaneously, they had a chance to look at their peers' paper and made corrections for them in both their mother tongue and in English. After their completion on giving comments on these papers, the raters (two of them) also took back these papers and gave

comments and grades on such papers. The first finding is that the majority of the participants could experience a more relaxing, confident and inspiring atmosphere. However, this study is similar to Miao et al. (2006) in that many of them seemed to be suspicious about their friends' corrections while they still saw their teacher's corrections were more reliable. Furthermore, the participants' perceptions brought themselves more insights and directions of writing in according to their peers' cognitive interaction of ideas. The participants in the study are willing to take part in giving and receiving each other's feedback.

In Lizzio & Wilson (2008)'s study, they investigated a group of 57 psychology, law and arts students on the three research questions. (1) What do students perceive as the characteristics or components of effective feedback on written assessment? (2) What is the underlying structure of students' perceptions of assessment feedback? (3) How do identified feedback components relate to students' evaluations of the effectiveness of assessment feedback? They investigated on the the domain of criteria such as encouragement (recognizing effort, acknowledging achievements, considerate criticism and giving hope), depthful criticism (depthful feedback), development focus (transferability, identifying goals, suggesting strategies, engaging content) and justice (justification of mark, transparency, opportunity for voice and clarity). They found the participants' perceptions of assessment feedback can be meaningfully understood in the three dimensions: developmental, encouraging and fair feedback. Then, students themselves can tell the quality of feedback providing.

Another effective peer feedback was conducted by Miao et al. (2006), who attempted to compare the feedback given by their classmates with that given by their classroom teacher. They discovered that the participants tended to believe more in their teacher's feedback than that provided by their friends through the analysis of the responses in the questionnaire and the paper quality. Nonetheless, peer feedback still played the role in enhancing these students' writing. Specifically, their results showed that teacher feedback class accounted for 3.59 (first draft), 4.46 (second draft) while peer feedback class constituted 4.08 (first draft) and 4.50 (second draft). Regarding the questionnaire, both groups posited that either teacher feedback or peer feedback are useful or very useful. For the eastern classroom culture, students venerate their teacher's knowledge and guidance. The result from this study gives us a good side of peer feedback.

In a study conducted by Liu & Carless (2006), peer feedback is also recommended in the classroom. However, it has to be implemented in some ways to facilitate this kind of feedback. They suggested using peer feedback integrated with peer assessment, strategies to involve students in peer feedback activities and creating a climate for peer feedback to happen. To motivate students to give and receive feedback positively, the classroom teacher should focus on the usefulness of peer feedback instead of prioritizing marks given to each other's work. A good strategy must assist students in understanding the criteria for assessing each other's work. When students can actually know what to look for in a task, they will become better assessors and learners later on. They also added that peer feedback activities should be carried out often in class.

Nelson (2004) conducted a thesis on “The Nature of Feedback: How Different of Peer Feedback Affect Writing Performance”. He found in his study that to let the feedback to be valued by their peers, the feedback provider must be able to give concrete comments on his or her classmate’s paper. He found that vague comments made their classmates unhappy and feedback receivers did not know what to do with those unclear comments. He also made some suggestions on how to give valuable comments. For example, what was the problem? Why was it a problem? Or show them what to do to improve the writing. What is more, he also found that feedback providers must be able to show useful comments on their peers’ paper. The feedback providers were to give feedback to their friends for the writing improvement purpose, not targeting the punishment on their peers for their mistakes. Instead, feedback providers have to give specific explanation to improve each particular issue in the writing.

Berg (1999) investigated effects of trained peer response ESL students’ revision types and writing quality on 46 writing students who received training on peer feedback. The findings revealed that all of the trainees showed writing improvement of the second draft after the revision of their first draft. They also found that trained students made revisions more meaning (more meaning-type revisions and text quality) than untrained ones. However, to make it easier, students’ papers applied a holistic scale of rating writing and were read blindly by the two trained raters whose results were then averaged. This finding suggests that the instructor ought to train their students to take part in peer feedback activities to better their own papers and their friends’ papers.

METHOD

Participants

The study recruited two groups of the tenth grade students at a high school in a rural district in Vietnam. The control group has 37 students and the experimental group consists of 39 students. Many of the students come from disadvantaged families because their parents work as farmers or vendors or sellers in the market, so their living situations and lifestyle are quite different from those in more advantageous big cities. They all are 16 years old and they are monolingual students and speak English as a foreign language. They started learning English when they were at grade 3. Before they came to the second semester of the academic school year, they had already been familiar with some reading texts like paragraph and essay styles that require them to use some source of writing to answer the questions or guided questions after reading the texts such as giving short answers to the questions. However, they had not written their own paragraph.

Materials

English 10 - Student book: Volume 2, a new version published in 2019 used in mass education in all high schools in Vietnam (Publisher: Bộ giáo dục và đào tạo) was used as the main source to provide the outline of a basic paragraph. The textbook consists of five units and each has a writing section at the final part of the unit. The outline of each unit is the same through the display of the textbook. Since all the paragraph topics in the textbooks are about general ideas, the authors spent approximately one period of the

class time reviewing the use of the simple present tense for both groups in the textbook. However, for the experimental group, a peer-editing worksheet was also delivered to students for giving comments on each other's work. The worksheet was adapted from that of Oshima and Hogue (2007), who designed many useful worksheets for providing feedback to their classmates' paragraphs and essays. Then, the authors selected a familiar topic about disadvantages of living in the countryside for the participants to write in the pre-test and posttest. This topic was as the same form as what they had practiced in class. The purpose of using this familiar topic is that the authors wanted to allow the students in both groups to write as many ideas as possible. If they could not write much, there would be nothing to evaluate.

Instruments

The study utilized two instruments to collect the data. The first instrument is using the participants' paragraphs at the pre-test and posttest to see their paragraph writing performance. Before delivering the pre-test, test-retest reliability was used to check the reliability of the test; the time between the two intervals was 3 days, the test conditions between the two times were the same. Then, the correlation coefficient (r) of the content of the test was calculated and the results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Reliability of the writing test

No	group	1 st time $\bar{X} \pm SD$	2 nd time $\bar{X} \pm SD$	r	Sig.
1	Experimental group	4.65 ± 1.06	4.68 ± 1.08	0.991	0.00
2	Control group	4.78 ± 0.98	4.80 ± 1.02	0.954	0.00

The results from Table 1 indicated that the writing test was reliable with $r > 0.95$ and sig. < 0.01). The figures indicated that the test could be used as the first instrument. What is more, to measure their paragraph performance, the authors designed a 10-scale paragraph scoring rubric containing three main domains: Domain 1 (worth 3 points) is looking for Task-Achievement (e.g. Your paragraph is interesting/addresses the task question). Domain 2 (worth 3 points) in the rubric is about Language use (e.g. Your paragraph has correct use of the simple present tense/ uses correct spellings/ uses correct punctuation and capitalization). Domain 3 (worth 4 points) is looking for the Organization of the paragraph (e.g. Your paragraph has the first indented sentence/ a topic sentence that has both a topic and a controlling idea at the first sentence/ contains several specific and factual supporting sentences that explain or prove the topic sentence, including at least one example/ ends with an appropriate concluding sentence). To obtain more information about the experimental group students, the authors also used the other tool to collect the participants' opinions on peer feedback providing. That is using the questionnaire which aims to elicit responses from the participants in the experimental group. The questionnaire consists of one part only. It has six items/questions which attempts to elicit participants' perspectives on peer feedback providing. Their responses were prompted to be given in the box that best describes

them with the numbers from 1 to 5 according to a five-point Likert Scale, from 1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: neutral, 4: agree and to 5: strongly agree. To see if the questions in the questionnaire were reliable enough to use, the authors test the reliability and it reached .831, meaning that it is reliable enough to use in the study as described in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Reliability statistics of the questionnaire about peer feedback providing

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.831	6

Procedure

The intervention comprised six class sessions and each writing class lasted for 45 minutes. These class sessions took place once a week in a period of one and a half month. At the first meeting, the instructor started with Unit 6 and the writing topic in this unit is about the disadvantages of working mothers. The instructor taught students how to construct a paragraph based on the content in the student's textbook. Once the students in both groups knew a clear picture of a paragraph and scoring criteria, he had them write a paragraph about disadvantages of working mothers for the pretest. Both groups had 20 minutes to write about it, and then their papers were collected for further analysis in the next class meeting. In the second meeting, students' papers were returned to them plus the teacher's feedback. The teacher reminded the whole class in two groups of some common errors they made in their papers and showed them the corrections, especially errors on the paragraph structure and the use of the simple present tense. After that, the classroom teacher collected the papers to compare with their posttest paragraphs. Before doing this, the classroom teacher seated the students in a comfortable place, at a safe distance where they could not exchange their ideas about the paragraph, or they could not cheat to use a dictionary or textbook to write their paragraph. At the third meeting, both the control group and experimental groups approached their paragraph writing as planned in the textbook. This time, they were to write a paragraph about some typical characteristics of Vietnamese people in Unit 7 in the textbook. Especially, while the control group students were sticking to the textbook only, the students in the experimental group received a different teaching method called using 'peer feedback' to help with their paragraph writing. Both groups during a period of six weeks receiving instruction on paragraph writing were asked to use a rubric introduced at the first meeting and then were trained how to use it to guide their writing; however, only the experimental students were instructed how to use a peer-editing worksheet to evaluate their classmates' paragraph papers later. Another difference between the two groups is the source of feedback. While the students in the control counterparts had their papers corrected by their teacher (but just some papers were corrected as a whole class due to time constraint), the students' papers in the experimental group received feedback by their friends.. In the fourth class meeting, both groups wrote a paragraph about the advantages of electronic devices as learning tools in Unit 8. The process of both groups took place as that in the third class meeting. Then, in the fifth meeting, the students in both groups wrote a paragraph about environmental

problems. The process applied for both groups was similar to that in the third and fourth meeting. However, the students in the experimental group were asked to rewrite their paragraph at home after receiving every feedback from their classmates. Then, they brought their revised paper to the next class meeting to hand it to the teacher, including their friends' feedback which was checked by the teacher who would give feedback on these students' comments on their friends' papers. Finally, again, in the sixth writing class meeting, the experimental group was told about the result of peer feedback and their improvement on their revised paragraphs. For the students in the control group, they were encouraged to write their paragraph as instructed based on what was displayed in the textbook. Then, both groups were told to take their post-test paragraph writing. They were asked to write the same type of paragraph in the pre-test (disadvantages of ...). This post test, they spent 20 minutes completing the writing task: disadvantages of living in the countryside compared to disadvantages of a working mother in the pretest. Then when the time allowance ended, the classroom teacher asked the participants to put their pen down and leave the paper on the table for collection. Finally, their papers were collected for analysis and comparison with their pre-test papers.

Data Collection and Analysis

For the pre-test, all 37 papers in the control group and 39 papers in the experimental group were collected for analysis of their paragraph performance. Three comparisons were employed: (1) The pretest result of control group was compared with that of the experimental group. (2) The post-test result of the control group was compared with that of the experimental group. (3) The pretest result of experimental group was compared with the post-test result of the experimental group. All the comparisons were conducted by using independent samples T-test and Paired Samples t-Test. After that, the analysis of the students' perspectives on peer feedback providing was done with the assistance of the SPSS. The process of analysis took the authors approximately 8 hours to finish computing, not including grading the students' test papers.

FINDINGS

Students' Writing Tests

Table 3 below describes the results of an independent samples T- test which was conducted to compare the experimental and control mean scores of the pre-test and the post-test before and after the experiment.

Table 3

Results of both groups in paragraph writing performance before and after the experiment

Test	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean difference	t-value	Sig
Pre-test	Experimental Group	39	4.65	1.06	-0.13	0.55	0.58
	Control Group	37	4.78	0.98			
Post test	Experimental Group	39	6.41	0.80	-1.34	6.86	0.00
	Control Group	37	5.07	0.89			

As can be seen in Table 3, the pre-test scores for the experimental group is (M= 4.65, SD= 1.06), which is very slightly different from the control group, accounting for (M= 4.7, SD= 0.98). However, there is no significant difference between the two groups (sig= 0.58 > 0.05). This is a good sign to start with as it is not reliable if the participants' English proficiency in writing in the both groups is much different.

After the treatment, a significant difference was seen in the post test scores of the two groups (sig = 0.00 < 0.05). While the scores for the experimental group was (M= 6.41, SD = 0.80), the control group made up higher value (M= 5.07, SD = 0.89).

To see the improvement of the participants within each group after the treatment, a Paired samples T-test was conducted. The data are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Paired samples T- test results for both tests within the experimental group and the control group

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Sig
Experimental Group	Pre-test	39	4.65	1.06	-13.75	0.00
	Post test	39	6.41	0.80		
Control Group	Pre-test	37	4.78	0.98	-2.01	0.06
	Post test	37	5.07	0.89		

Table 4 is used to describe the scores of the same group and it was employed to compare their pre-test scores and post test scores. The results showed that the participants in the experimental group produced greater marks for their post-test paragraph writing with (M= 6.41) while their pre-test showed (M = 4.65). It shows a significant difference between the two test scores in the experimental group (sig=0.00 < 0.05). Meanwhile the control group mean scores were observed and found a slight difference, but this difference has no statistical meaning (sig=0.06 > 0.05).

The results of the experimental group pose significant difference after the treatment, so a Paired Sample T-test was conducted to see the improvement of each scoring criterion. The data are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5
Paired samples T- test data for scoring criteria of the experimental group

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Sig
Scoring criterion 1: Task Achievement	Pre-test	39	1.38	0.51	-5.43	0.00
	Post test	39	1.79	0.40		
Scoring criterion 2: Language	Pre-test	39	1.44	0.56	-8.46	0.00
	Post test	39	2.01	0.40		
Scoring criterion 3: Organization	Pre-test	39	1.83	0.50	-9.93	0.00
	Post test	39	2.63	0.40		

The results showed that the participants in the experimental group produced greater marks for their post-test paragraph writing in Task Achievement with (M= 1.79) while their pre-test scores showed (M = 1.38). For Language criterion, it was seen that the participants in the experimental group had better marks in their post-test (M= 2.01) compared with their pre-test (M = 1.44). For the last criterion, organization, the results showed that the participants in the experimental group produced greater marks for their post-test paragraph writing in the Organization domain with (M= 2.63) while their pre-test scores showed (M = 1.83). It can be concluded that all the three values of the post-test after the experiment surpassed the figures of the pre-test.

Questionnaire

This part of the findings is about the questionnaire which was delivered to 39 student participants for their opinion on their ability to write a paragraph in English after receiving feedback from their classmates. One-sample statistics was employed to show the mean score of their opinion on peer feedback providing with the mean score of 3.99 as seen in Table 6 below.

Table 6
Descriptive statistics for the six items in the questionnaire about the use of peer feedback

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
It helps me improve my paragraph writing in general.	39	1.00	5.00	4.00	.92
It helps me improve topic development.	39	2.00	5.00	3.85	.78
It helps me improve ability to write supporting ideas.	39	1.00	5.00	3.79	.86
It helps me improve my ability to give more details.	39	2.00	5.00	3.82	.72
It helps me improve my ability to write the concluding sentence.	39	1.00	5.00	4.26	.79
It helps my ability to use the simple present tense in writing paragraphs with the main use of this tense.	39	2.00	5.00	4.20	.80
Overall				3.99	.20

In particular, as can be seen in Table 6, the majority of the students showed their agreement in peer feedback providing. At the first glance, the mean scores for most questions reached nearly or above 4 (agree).

DISCUSSION

Tests

As apparently seen in all the tables of comparing the students' writing tests, the experimental group benefited the use of peer feedback providing activities in the classroom. Prior to the treatment, the experimental group did not exceed their counterparts in the control group in terms of scores awarded. A 10- scale scoring rubric of a paragraph was employed and it has three language domains to be rated: Task achievement (3 points), language use (3 points) and paragraph organization (4 points). As seen in Table 3, the mean score of the experimental group was 4.65 and that of the control group was 4.78, so they could be seen almost the same ($\text{sig} = 0.58 > 0.05$). When comparing post-test results, it is obvious that the score of the experimental group outreached that of the control group, with the mean scores = 6.41 and 5.07, respectively. When looking closer at each grading domain as depicted in Table 5, the experimental group performed better in their post-test. Their outcomes for paragraph writing domains have improved compared to those at their placement (Task achievement: pre-test $M = 1.38$, post-test $M = 1.79$ per 3 points; Language pre-test $M = 1.44$, post-test $M = 2.01$ per 3 points and Organization pre-test $M = 1.83$, post-test $M = 2.63$ per 4 points). The significant difference of the scores awarded in task achievement, language and organization shows quite large between the two intervals ($\text{sig} = 0.00$).

This present result is aligned with Kuyyogsuy (2019), whose study showed a positive result after the intervention of using peer feedback in writing and it is that his students had fewer mistakes of language use in writing. In addition, the current result reflects the study by Uymaz (2019), who found a more improvement of the post-test essays of the participants after the introduction of peer feedback. Then, the current finding also accords the study conducted by Huisman et al. (2018), whose work used peer feedback to affect academic writing and they found these participants could write better after revision. This result also reflects that of Elfiyanto and Fukazawa (2021), who found feedback helped make Indonesian students improve their writing.

Berg (1999)'s findings revealed that the trainees who provided and received peer feedback were able to write better at the second draft than in the first draft. Finally, Huisman et al. (2018) also studied the effects of feedback on students' essay revisions among 83 undergraduate students and the results showed that many of them could take advantage of this peer feedback activity to sharpen their essays at the later draft. These two studies are in line with the current study in that their ultimate paper was much improved after receiving comments from peers.

In short, through these current studies and many of the previous studies, it can be concluded that to be able to write better, many writing students experienced peer feedback, receiving the training of peer feedback and exchanging their opinions on their first draft before sharpening the second one.

Questionnaire

Looking closely at the six questions in Table 4.12, positive responses were given by the majority of the participants. This is in general a quite positive sign to apply peer feedback providing though not all the responses to the items in the questionnaire obtained level 4 (agree) or 5 (strongly agree) on a five-point Likert scale. The first item in the questionnaire obtained a mean score of 4.00. Therefore, these peer feedback activities should be encouraged in the writing class so that both the classroom teacher and his or students can both take advantage of it. Feedback helps the classroom teacher reduce their burden on teaching, and at the same time it gives learners an opportunity to work together to exchange useful ideas. Item 2 in the questionnaire received the mean score of 3.85, demonstrating positive responses. Although it did not reach 4 (agree), the total response almost reached it and this hinted us that the students can work better at developing the topic sentence after the training of using peer feedback activities in their writing class. Evidently, it is not easy to develop a topic for a paragraph. When looking at some paragraph writing samples of the pre-test. Then, in the sentences below the topic sentence, some students did not mention things that are advantageous to living in the countryside. But then, in the post test, many of them could focus on only one aspect of the issue as requested in the instruction and wrote about it through the paragraph. Item 3 in the questionnaire obtained a slightly low result, $M = 3.79$. This mean score did not obtain 4 (agree), but it still indicated that the mean passed 3 (neutral idea) and at least close to 4. Interestingly, their responses to this question accords with what the majority of the participants did in their pre-test and post-test. Item 4 in the question received a mean score of 3.82. This result was almost similar to that given to Item 2. In comparing their pre-test and post test samples, they did write more at the post test. Many could give more ideas in their paragraph although some ideas were not related to the given topic. Item 5 obtained a mean score of 4.26. This is a positive response because the majority of the experimental students (when referring to the pre-test and post-test analytical results) did not write a persuasive or forgot to write the concluding sentence for their paragraph at the pre-test, but most of them confessed in the survey they remembered the structure of a paragraph as provided by Savage & Shafiei (2012). The last item achieved $M = 4.20$, which suggests students can learn more about the simple present tense.

This result is aligned with Yu and Hu (2017, p.186), who found many interesting positive opinions of peer feedback in their study as quoted in Section 2: Literature review above. The majority of the participants in their study showed their positive attitude toward peer feedback providing and only a few chose not to engage in such activities in the future. Moore and Teather (2013) also discovered that two thirds of the participants agreed that peer review is a very useful activity. The majority of students in the study carried out by Wakabayashi (2013) prefer a standard type feedback to exchange comments in writing. The current results also accord with the participants' opinion on peer feedback providing conducted by Lin & Chien (2009) when they attempted to discover these participants about the usefulness of peer feedback. The current findings are also in line with that by Lizzio & Wilson (2008) when they aimed to discover how the participants in their study perceived peer feedback activities. The majority said that peer feedback can be meaningfully understood. This opinion on peer

feedback providing assembles many of the findings found previously, showing a positive attitude toward peer feedback activities.

CONCLUSION

The study discovered that peer feedback is useful in the writing class and this continues to prove that peer feedback can be used in the classroom. The control group, after six weeks of treatment, were able to write their paragraph better in terms of task achievement, language use and paragraph organization. They also showed their satisfaction about the usefulness of peer feedback activities. The experimental group benefiting from the train of using peer feedback worksheet and scoring rubric could produce better drafts after the training time of using feedback in their writing class. Their post test result also outweighed that of the control group and their own pretest results. In order to measure the students' writing performance in both groups, the authors used a paragraph scoring rubric which consists of three main domains. The first domain was about task-Achievement. The second domain is about the language use in the paragraph. The final domain is about the organization of the paragraph. For the experimental group, the scores of each domain in the post test outwent those of each domain in the pretest. For the control group, they also had a better result than that of their pretest one; however, this did not surpass the post test result of the experimental students. What is more, the second part of the study is the use of the questionnaire. The study also looked at the experimental students' opinions on peer feedback providing and they also showed positive attitudes toward this activity in their writing class, which accords with their post test results.

Some implications below should be brought into consideration. First, peer feedback can be used in many levels of classes. In this current study, the participants are high school students and they were able to acquire the method of giving each other's feedback quite well, so other teachers may find this use of peer feedback useful in their own classroom, too. However, it is noteworthy that to optimize the idea of providing feedback, the classroom teacher has to plan the process neatly and carefully starting from their first class like what Lin & Chien (2009) mentioned in their study when the participants' hard work on applying peer feedback strategies paid off. One more implication of this study is that the classroom teacher has to be patient and meticulous in doing modeling in front of class and in providing examples of what is acceptable and what is not so their students can learn and imitate critically later on. This point had already been made clear in Moore and Teather (2013) about giving constructive feedback, Wakabayashi (2013) about detailed feedback on texts and Lin & Chien (2009) about a relaxing, confident and inspiring atmosphere for peer feedback. The third implication is that it is the classroom teacher who has to ensure that they have paired or grouped students appropriately prior to giving peer feedback. This is done to eliminate sceptics as once one feels sceptical one finds it hard to accept things. It reflects what Miao et al. (2006) included in their research when they found that peers tended to trust their classmates lesser than their teachers in regard to knowledge. For future research, they may want to investigate how male and male students give feedback to each other and how female and female students provide each other with feedback. This will possibly produce a different result between

the two groups. One more investigation can be made in the future is that can students train their peers on how to give feedback to their classmates as many previous studies tended to focus greatly on the effect of peer feedback on the ultimate text-writing performance, not on what they can present orally in front of class?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research is funded by University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Tra Vinh University, Vietnam.

REFERENCES

- Berg, C. E. (1999). The effects of trained peer response ESL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(3), 215-241.
- Bijami, M., Kashef, S. H. & Nejad, M. S. (2013). Peer feedback in learning English writing: advantages and disadvantages. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 3(4), 91-97.
- Bộ giáo dục đào tạo (2019). Tiếng Anh 10, sách học sinh, tập hai. Nha Trang, Viet Nam: Nhà Xuất Bản Giáo Dục Việt Nam và Pearson.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Pearson Education.
- Cassidy, R. & Bailey, D. (2018). L2 Students' Perceptions and Practices of both Giving and Receiving Online Peer-Feedback. *Multimedia-Assisted Language Learning*, 21(1) 11-34.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Heinle & Heinle.
- Heerden, M. V. & Bharuthram, S. (2021). Knowing me, knowing you: the effects of peer familiarity on receiving peer feedback for undergraduate student writers. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 1-11.
- Elfiyanto, S., & Fukazawa, S. (2021). Three written corrective feedback sources in improving Indonesian and Japanese students' writing achievement. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(3), 433-450.
- Huisman, B., Saab, N., Driel, J. V & Broek, P. V. D. (2018). Peer feedback on academic writing: undergraduate students' peer feedback role, peer feedback perceptions and essay performance. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(6), 955-968.
- Kroll, B. (2001). Considerations for teaching an ESL/EFL writing course. In M. Celce-Murcia (Eds.). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed., pp. 219-232). Heinle & Heinle.
- Kusumaningrum, S. R., Cahyono, B. Y. & Prayogo, J. A. (2019). The effect of different types of peer feedback provision on EFL students' writing performance. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(1), 213-224. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2019.12114a>

- Kuyyogsuy, S. (2019). Promoting Peer Feedback in Developing Students' English Writing Ability in L2 Writing Class. *International Education Studies*, 12(9), 76-90.
- Lin, G. H. C. & Chien, P. S. C. (2009). An Investigation into Effectiveness of Peer Feedback. *Journal of Applied Foreign Languages Fortune Institute of Technology*, 3, 79-87.
- Liu, NF; Carless, D. (2006). Peer feedback: The learning element of peer assessment. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 11, (3), 279-290.
- Lizzio, A. & Wilson, K. (2008). Feedback on assessment: students' perceptions of quality and effectiveness. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33(3), 263-275. [tps://doi: 10.1080/02602930701292548](https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930701292548).
- Miao, Y., Badger, R., & Zhen, Y. (2006). A comparative study of peer and teacher feedback in a Chinese EFL writing class. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 15, 179-200.
- Moore, C. Teather, S. (2013). Engaging Students in Peer Review: Feedback as Learning. *Issues in Educational Research*, 23(2), 196-211.
- Nelson, M. (2004). The nature of feedback: how different types of peer feedback affect writing performance (B.A. Thesis), 1-48. University of South Florida.
- Oshima, A. and Hogue, A. (2007). Introduction to academic writing (3rd ed.). New York: USA. Pearson Education.
- Panadero, E., Brown, G. T. L. Strijbos, J. W. (2015). The Future of Student Self-Assessment: A Review of Known Unknowns and Potential Directions. *Educational Psychology Review*, 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9350>
- Peterson, S. S. (2013). Peer feedback on writing: *An assessment for – learning tool. Research for Teachers*, 13, 1-3.
- Pham, H. , Phung, L. T. K., Oanh, T. T. T., & Giao, N. Q. (2020). Should peer E-comments replace traditional peer comments? *International Journal of Instruction*, 13(1), 295-314. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2020.13120a>
- Rollinson, P. (2005). Using peer feedback in the ESL writing class. *ELT Journal*, 59(1), 23-30.
- Savage, A. & Shafiei, M. (2012). Effective academic writing 2. (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Schunn, S. D. and WU, Y. (2019). The learning science of multi peer feedback for EFL students. *China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House*, 189, 13-21.
- Topping, K. (2010). Peer assessment between students in colleges and universities. *American Educational Research Association*, 68(3), 249-276.
- Uymaz, E. (2019), The Effects of Peer Feedback on the Essay Writing Performances of EFL Students. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 11(2), 20-37.

Wakabayashi, R. (2013). The effects of the peer feedback process on reviewers' own writing. *English Language Teaching*, 6(9), 177-192.

Westwood, P. (2008). What teachers need to know about: Teaching methods. ACER Press.

Yu, S. and Hu, G. (2017). Can higher-proficiency L2 learners benefit from working with lower-proficiency partners in peer feedback? *Teaching In Higher Education*, 22(2), 178-192.

Yu, S. & Lee, I. (2016). Peer feedback in second language writing (2005–2014). *Lang. Teach*, 49(4), 461-493.

Yu, S. & Lee, I. (2016). Understanding the role of learners with low English language proficiency in peer feedback of second language writing. *TESOL QUARTERLY*, 50(2), 483-494.