Peer Instruction Integrated with Process Writing in EFL Writing Sessions: A Classroom Observation*

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Abstract

This study investigated how peer instruction integrated with process writing influences EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students' writing competence in a Chinese university. It randomly chose one intact class of non-English majors to implement the peer instruction and process writing approaches. The researcher divided the class into seven sub-groups to fulfill the writing tasks smoothly. Employing a qualitative research design, this study utilized observation methods to collect data. Three non-participant observers were invited with the researcher to observe the writing sessions among the sub-groups in the intact class. Thematic analysis of observation data showed that students effectively used peer instruction skills during all stages of process writing: planning, generating ideas, translating, editing, and revising. Integrating peer instruction with process writing served as a positive catalyst, motivating EFL students. Following Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) principle, this integration significantly broadened students' ZPD. By working within this zone, students unlocked their full developmental potential, surpassing their current abilities, leading to a more efficient and effective writing process.

Keywords: *Peer Instruction, Process Writing, EFL Students, Writing Competence, ZPD*

INTRODUCTION

Since implementing the Reform and Opening-up policy, China has achieved remarkable socioeconomic advancements and attained significant international stature, paralleling the worldwide surge in English usage. In today's globalized society, proficiency in the English language is paramount, particularly for Chinese youth aspiring to pursue international educational or career opportunities (Yuan, 2022). However, despite these advancements, challenges persist in the writing abilities of college EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in China, underscoring the urgency for efficient and effective teaching methodologies (Jayanti, 2019; Liu & Pang, 2023; Lun et al., 2020).

Mazur (1997) argues that the peer instruction technique transforms traditional teacher-focused classrooms into environments that prioritize inquiry, discussion, and interaction. Under this approach, students are actively encouraged to share their insights and perspectives with their peers, collaboratively elucidating their comprehension (Mazur, 2014; Singh & Harun, 2021). Moreover, the process writing method, a comprehensive and contemporary framework, emphasizes students' cognitive processes throughout the writing journey, as outlined by Flower and Hayes (1980, 1996) and further advocated by Zhao et al. (2022). Despite these claims, there is still a shortage of data supporting peer instruction in Chinese EFL writing classes. Thus, this study aims to ascertain how EFL students' writing performance was affected by integrating process writing with peer instruction in a Chinese higher education setting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

PEER INSTRUCTION

Harvard University's Eric Mazur invented and refined the peer instruction approach in 1997. Before this, Mazur, a physics educator since 1984, employed traditional teaching methods, such as assigning textbooks,

taking notes, conducting experiments, and covering textbook content in class (Zhang, 2019). However, in 1990, he began to reflect on the limitations of these conventional methods. Students often enter the classroom without understanding physics principles from their daily experiences. These preconceived notions can make it difficult for students to accept the teachings of their teachers, hindering the development of scientific concepts and preventing the clarification of misconceptions through traditional teaching methods. Mazur devised the peer instruction approach to address this issue as an alternative teaching technique. This approach fosters active learning by encouraging students to collaboratively confront and work through their misconceptions through interactive discussions and peer engagement.

Zhang and Mazur (2010) first introduced the peer instruction approach to China in a journal article published in China University Teaching. This method, which has been utilized by Chinese educators across all levels of education, from university professors to primary school teachers, to teach a diverse array of subjects, was initially presented by Zhang and Mazur in their article. Before discussing the significance of Mazur's peer instruction approach for education, the authors provided a comprehensive overview of the methodology in this journal paper.

According to Vygotsky (1978), students undergo two stages of development: potential and current. Their current development level refers to the psychological functions that emerge from a specific, completed developmental system. Conversely, their prospective level of development represents the stage they are yet to attain. Vygotsky coined the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to describe these two levels' gaps. By harnessing the ZPD concept proposed by Vygotsky (1978), students' writing abilities can be enhanced and nurtured through mutual encouragement and assistance. Peer instruction offers students diverse opportunities to elevate their ZPD and potential for growth in English writing.

PROCESS WRITING

The initial challenge scholars encounter when attempting to define the process writing approach is the need for socially acceptable criteria to characterize it. Various scholars, including Nunan (1999) and Brown (2001), have put forward definitions of process writing. While these definitions exhibit slight variations, they share a common thread: writing is a multifaceted activity that entails intricate relationships between writers, teachers, and other writers. Notably, Flower and Hayes (1980, 1996) introduced a comprehensive and innovative model of process writing, which also incorporated insights into working memory and task context.

Flower and Hayes' model primarily focuses on the cognitive processes underlying the writing process and the interplay between the task environment and individual writers. In contrast, earlier process writing methodologies often centered around the tangible tasks of writing, such as drafting, rewriting, and editing. This model elucidates how writers prepare, translate, and refine their works during the writing process, utilizing cognitive resources like working memory and long-term memory. Flower and Hayes' process writing approach encapsulates and monitors five key steps: planning, translating, generating ideas, editing, and revising.

PLANNING

According to Flower and Hayes, process writing commences with the planning stage. Upon receiving their writing assignments from the teacher, students determine the topic's central idea and genre, gather relevant ideas and data, and subsequently craft an outline for the paper (Zhong, 2016). During this planning phase, students are tasked with generating and collecting ideas surrounding the chosen topic. Brainstorming is a valuable technique during this stage, encouraging active participation from each group member (Istianah, 2020).

GENERATING IDEAS

After a collaborative brainstorming session and evaluation among group members, each individual arrives at their conclusion. The teacher allocates a few minutes for students to reflect on the subject and develop ideas for their writing. As writing reflects and expresses one's thoughts, teachers should grant students ample time to plan and organize their ideas (Karanja, 2021). It has been discovered that the process writing approach offers students significant learning autonomy and increased opportunities to engage with peers in the group to obtain

feedback on their work. This fosters an environment that encourages students to develop, refine, and expand upon their ideas, employing a brainstorming approach (Dhanya & Alamelu, 2020).

TRANSLATING

After developing their concepts, the students move on to the translating stage, where they begin composing their initial drafts. Their focus is on articulating their ideas into words through text production and transcription, aiming to create a coherent and well-organized manuscript (Kadmiry, 2021). At this point, writers employ reflective inquiry to construct sentences, ensuring they convey their intended meaning through the chosen linguistic forms.

EDITING

According to Flower and Hayes (1996), process writing underscores the significance of editing, which serves as a critical means to scrutinize the initial draft for any errors in spelling, grammatical usage, and adherence to assignment instructions. It is widely acknowledged that students who master self-editing techniques are more likely to identify and correct their mistakes, producing more error-free and well-structured writing (Sangeetha, 2019).

REVISING

At this juncture, the students receive their written assignments and are expected to revise their drafts, considering feedback and criticism from their teachers and classmates (Zhong, 2016). Authors refine their initial manuscripts by introducing apt word and phrase modifications to create more coherent paragraphs (Kadmiry, 2021).

METHOD

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted a qualitative research design using observation as the primary mode of data collection. Observation has long been fundamental in understanding the social and natural worlds (Daston & Lunbeck, 2019). Given that qualitative observation involves an element of uncertainty, researchers must be vigilant in capturing all potentially relevant occurrences and documenting them thoroughly in field notes (Zhong, 2016). Typically conducted in a natural setting, qualitative observation is often employed for exploratory purposes. During the group writing exercises, the researcher observed the classroom environment, taking note of the teaching methods and interactions within the learning space.

Utilizing a process writing checklist (Hayes & Flower, 1980, 1996), the researcher and non-participant observers assessed how the integrated instructional approach influenced the writers' performance during the writing sessions. Additionally, the observers captured the group members' interactions and discussions on camera, as these discussions were crucial for identifying the specific peer instruction subskills employed during the group writing sessions.

RESEARCH SETTING

The study was conducted at a renowned university in the Chinese province of Anhui, University L. This institution stands out as a prominent construction-focused university in the province, offering multidisciplinary education with a strong emphasis on engineering. Its undergraduate programs span diverse fields, including engineering, science, literature, economics, management, law, and others, with over 60 options available. Furthermore, University L boasts three autonomous multidisciplinary master's degrees, eleven professional master's degrees, and seventeen master's degrees in first-class fields.

In scientific research, population refers to the entire set of individuals or objects that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study. This group serves as the focal point of the investigation and often provides the basis for analysis and generalization to a broader context (Lohr, 2021). The selection of a representative sample from this population is crucial to minimize errors and ensure the completeness and accuracy of the findings.

For this study, the population comprised EFL teachers with prior expertise in teaching writing and second-year EFL students who were not majoring in English. Most EFL students at University L are non-English majors, so the study focused on this group. Additionally, the researcher enlisted the support of teachers with experience in teaching English writing to assist in completing this study.

RESEARCH SAMPLES

SAMPLE A: EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Utilizing the randomization principle, the researcher employed probability sampling to select student participants, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal chance of being chosen (Banning, 2021). Given that all EFL students at University L were enrolled in intact classes, the researcher opted for cluster sampling—a probability sampling approach—and selected one group from each of the 57 intact classes.

The target audience for the intervention of the peer instruction and process writing approaches comprised the students within this selected group, totaling 29 participants (N=29). This cohort was administered the integrated instructional approach, which combined peer instruction and process writing throughout the study. The researchers implemented their modifications and innovations within this framework. To assess the intervention's effectiveness, the researcher closely monitored the participants' progress, behavior, and outcomes throughout the study. It was anticipated that the group members would benefit from the teaching strategies evaluated. The students were divided into seven groups, each undergoing process writing and peer instruction techniques (Group 1 to Group 7).

SAMPLE B: LANGUAGE TEACHERS

The researcher and three non-participant observers assumed the role of language teachers for the study. Since the assistance of experienced educators was essential to this research, the researcher employed purposeful non-probability sampling procedures (Obilor, 2023) to select them. These chosen educators were all English teachers from the School of Foreign Languages at University L, teaching college English for numerous years, mainly focusing on writing instruction. Notably, the non-participant observers voluntarily assisted the researcher in conducting this investigation.

THE RESEARCHER

An English writing teacher at a college assumed the multifaceted role of researcher, teacher, and classroom facilitator for this study. This unique position entailed ensuring that his research and curricular demands were seamlessly integrated into the classroom environment. Throughout the writing process, the researcher assigned writing tasks to each group, guided peer instruction sessions, and observed the proceedings alongside non-participant observers. To capture crucial data, he recorded and transcribed group discussions. The researcher's role exhibited a remarkable blend of intricacy and adaptability.

NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVERS

The non-participant observers, as they are not involved in the study and are devoid of conflicts or ulterior motives, tend to adopt a more critical, objective, and unbiased stance (Mahlambi et al., 2022). These three observers, who were English lecturers at the researcher's institution, were led by the researcher to scrutinize aspects of peer instruction and process writing features during the classroom sessions. They paid particular attention to the student-to-student engagement during writing assignments and the linguistic nuances employed. Moreover, they observed whether students assisted each other in completing writing tasks and if those with superior performance supported their peers who lagged. To facilitate the researcher's data collection for this study, the observers conducted individual interviews or compiled field notes while observing the students.

TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE INSTRUMENTS

In qualitative research, it is widely acknowledged that investigators must validate their findings through open and honest data collection, rigorous analysis, and thoughtful engagement with the research setting (Creswell &

Miller, 2000). In this study, an observation checklist was employed to document classroom observations. Derived from and modified based on previous research projects, this instrument had undergone rigorous validation, avoiding the need for a complete ground-up development. Nonetheless, the investigator went beyond these measures to further enhance the reliability of the qualitative instrument.

PEER DEBRIEFING

Peer debriefing, a technique aimed at bolstering the credibility of qualitative studies, entails a researcher engaging with an unbiased peer to scrutinize aspects of the research that the researcher may have overlooked or taken for granted from their perspective (Amin et al., 2020). In this study, three non-participant observers collaborated with the researcher to code the themes discerned during classroom observations, thus ensuring the reliability of the data. Initially, the researcher independently coded the topics based on the interview data. Subsequently, two PhD candidates, classmates of the researcher, were granted access to the interview transcripts and independently coded the topics to assess the concordance between the two coding sets. This systematic approach further fortified the validity of the qualitative findings.

MEMBER CHECKING

As advocated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), member checking is a pivotal method for qualitative researchers to fortify the validity of their findings. This process involves presenting participants with data, analytic categories, interpretations, and even conclusions derived by the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In this study, participants were invited to review transcripts of their interviews or observation notes to verify the integrity and authenticity of their experiences. Furthermore, the researcher shared some qualitative data analysis with the participants to confirm that the data analysis accurately captured the perspectives and experiences of the students as well as the three non-participant observers. By incorporating participants in this validation process, the researcher ensured that the qualitative instruments adequately captured the complexity and depth of the participants' viewpoints.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The observational data constitutes the bulk of the qualitative data in this study. The researcher and three non-participant observers relied on observation checklists to monitor the writing sessions. Additionally, recordings of the group discussions were made.

The researcher used verbatim transcription to document classroom conversations to capture the intricate nuances of speech, including hesitations, pauses, repetitions, and non-verbal cues (McMullin, 2023). This transcription method aptly suited the study's requirements, as the qualitative data focused on peer interactions (Hill et al., 2022). Despite being instructed to discuss in English, the students occasionally reverted to their native language, Mandarin. To mitigate bias, the researcher recruited non-participant observers to assist in translating the Mandarin dialogue into English.

To prepare for a thematic analysis, the researcher coded the qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a versatile and widely preferred technique for analyzing qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2023). Utilizing a deductive (top-down) coding approach, the researcher and non-participant observers collaborated to code the transcribed observation data. This approach was chosen to precisely document the components of peer education in the students' conversations, providing a clear direction for analysis (Alvfeldt et al., 2023). The predetermined themes were derived from the five process writing stages outlined in the process writing observation checklist.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

During the observation, critical aspects of the process writing approach were diligently noted, encompassing idea generation, planning, translation, editing, and revision. The focal point of this observation was to examine how students utilized peer instruction to accomplish their writing tasks. Initially, the students exhibited uncertainty regarding the various steps involved in process writing, making it challenging to effectively support their peers in refining their writing skills. To address this, the teacher provided a detailed breakdown of each phase of process writing, outlining specific strategies and techniques for implementing peer training. After a

week of rigorous training, the students became accustomed to receiving peer guidance and could apply it while working on their process writing assignments.

PLANNING

The teacher steered the debate, assigning a title and introducing the main idea for the section. Students then engaged in group discussions, searching for relevant material, posing queries, and providing responses. To facilitate brainstorming, the lecturer introduced mind maps and fishbone diagrams as visual aids. Peer learners collaborated to fill out the mind maps or fishbone diagrams, exchanging ideas and collaborating effectively.

These techniques align with research by Sabarun et al. (2021), who encouraged students to outline their essays using mind maps. Similarly, Meilian and Natasha (2023) advocated using fishbone diagrams to organize essays for their study. Prior studies have shown that mind maps and fishbone diagrams simplify and clarify student planning (Sabarun et al., 2021; Meilian & Natasha, 2023).

During the planning phase of the group process writing, students actively participated in group discussions, employing various peer instruction strategies and sub-skills. The researcher and non-participant observers observed these peer instruction components during this phase. Below are some illustrative excerpts.

Excerpt 1 : Planning stage of process writing in Group 1

Wang   We are now ready to get going. We are writing a narrative essay this time. We must first clarify the requirements of the narrative essay.

Wen   Indeed, it is about cause, method, outcome, time, place, and person.

Meng   In essence, I concur with that perspective. Since we're writing about a mysterious package, it only makes sense to draw attention to its source.

Shui   Because it's a tale, there's still a lot of space for creativity. We can add fantastical elements, such as claiming it is ultimately a dream.

Group 1 planned the narrative essay "The Mysterious Package" enthusiastically and creatively. They engaged in lively discussions, exchanging ideas and details about the interconnected topics. They deliberated on the fundamental components of a narrative essay, ensuring that they understood its structure and requirements. Furthermore, they delved into the subject of their narrative story, the mysterious package, and discussed its various aspects. During this dialogue, students shared relevant information and thoughts, providing each other with a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter they would tackle in their essay. This collaborative approach aligns with the findings of a study conducted by Lin (2022), where students participated in pre-writing conversations and exchanged viewpoints with their peers, fostering a deeper understanding of the essay topic.

Excerpt 2 : Planning stage of process writing in Group 7

Han   First, think about the main points the teacher mentioned in writing a narrative story. Character conflicts are what we should expect. What other points are there?

Xia   Time, place, purpose, and emphasizing the character's qualities should all align with Chinese composition.

Ma   Since the package is mysterious, that mystery should be the main point of interest. Unknowable things, in my opinion, can spark interest more.

Nie   I believe it is feasible. Foreign films often have situations whereby a curious character ventures into a fantasy world. We can mimic this and somewhat overdo it in our writing.

In Excerpt 2, Group 7 outlined their narrative essay, "The Mysterious Package", with precision and creativity. They began by identifying the crucial components of a narrative essay, laying the foundation for a well-structured piece. They then focused on the essay's central topic, delving into the enigmatic package's mystery. During their brainstorming session, the group drew parallels between their narrative essay and foreign films,

where protagonists explore mysterious worlds. This approach broadened their perspectives and enriched their understanding of the narrative genre. As a result, students benefited from peer education during the planning phase, expanding their knowledge and comprehension of the writing subject.

This collaborative approach aligns with the findings of Gezmiş's (2020) study, which emphasized the importance of collaborative conversations during the planning stage to add depth and meaning to students' writing. Consistently, group members employed peer instruction regularly during the planning phase. They encountered diverse ideas, expertise, and firsthand experiences from their peers, significantly enhancing and broadening their understanding of the chosen writing topic. This outcome also aligns with Kusumaningrum et al.'s (2019) study, which demonstrated that students were motivated to utilize peer instruction to complete the writing planning process.

GENERATING IDEAS

As students embark on the writing process, they cultivate pertinent and insightful concepts that serve as the backbone of their content (Flower & Hayes, 1996). They refine and sharpen these ideas through discussion as they proceed to the writing stage. As they narrow their focus and identify the essential points, the discussion in this phase becomes more targeted than during the planning stage, yielding more relevant and valuable insights for the essay.

With this focused approach, students can craft a concise and well-organized essay outline as a roadmap for their first draft. This process aligns with Pham's (2021) study, which emphasized outlining in the planning stage. Students were encouraged to generate ideas and formulate an outline during the collaborative writing process, guided by the teacher.

In their outlines, students covered all the crucial issues they intended to incorporate, structuring their essays with distinct topics and subtopics. This framework enhanced their writing efficiency and facilitated readers' comprehension, as the organization made the content readily accessible (Bongga, 2022). Based on this outline, students swiftly drafted their first version, demonstrating their proficiency in peer instruction. Here are a few excerpts from their collaborative dialogues.

Excerpt 3：Generating-idea stage of process writing in Group 3

Liu   One sentence might be used at the beginning to attract the reader's interest in what they are reading. This statement can add to the essay's feeling of mystery and make sense in the later sections. The heroine of the essay is primarily concerned with what happens after she receives a mysterious delivery.

Jia   How about putting it this way: "He finally went there after leaving home"? Upon opening the package, he discovers it contains instructions for locating a mysterious object. In any case, the conclusion suggests that it was a dream, which raises some intriguing questions.

Wu   Yes, in fact. The protagonist's personality can be highlighted by presenting a prominent character image. The main character ought to be bold and daring.

Sun   You can include an image of his wife because they can't agree on what to do with the parcel. His wife is against the protagonist's insistence on visiting that mysterious location.

Jia   Wonderful! We know exactly what needs to be done in the introductory paragraph now.

Liu emphasized the importance of an engaging opening for "The Mysterious Package", their narrative essay, advocating for a captivating introduction that stresses the element of surprise surrounding the package. Jia then suggested altering the essay's initial line to "It was a dream", aiming to intensify the aura of mystery surrounding the narrative. Wu and Sun concurred, further proposing incorporating details about the protagonist's personality and spouse. As Jia concluded, the structure and content of the introductory paragraph were crystal clear, having been thoroughly developed through the collaborative efforts of their peers. This finding echoes Karanja's (2021) study, demonstrating the significance of students' ideas generated before first draft writing.

Excerpt 4：Generating-idea stage of process writing in Group 4

Li　　We can start at the campus entrance by describing the buildings on the left and right of the gate.

Zhang　There should be more beauty and vibrancy in language. We should broaden our description by following spatial order, traveling through dorm buildings, lakes, and other places, and utilizing more detailed language.

Shuo　　We can add several seasonal aspects to a scene to better describe it.

Yang　　Yes, please. After that, we'll describe the final little north gate, where the head and tail echo one another. The teacher advises writing in spatial order, focusing on essential points, and avoiding writing too much of everything.

In Excerpt 4, Group 4 generated increasingly relevant ideas for their descriptive essay, "The University Campus". Li initiated the discussion by proposing a specific structure for arranging the essay's spatial elements. Zhang followed suit, focusing on the linguistic requirements of the essay. Shuo then contributed by suggesting that seasonal details be included to enrich the description. Yang skillfully synthesized the perspectives of their peers and provided a concise summary. This collaborative process, where participants offered advice and encouragement, reaffirmed the findings of Sangeetha's (2019) study on the benefits of peer instruction in the writing process.

As a result of applying peer instruction techniques during the group process writing stage of idea generation, the group gained a solid understanding of the material they would cover in their essays. This achievement was facilitated by their fellow students' valuable suggestions and encouragement. The coherence of these findings aligns with the study conducted by Zou and Xie (2019), which utilized peer instruction to assist students in developing ideas for their English writing, further validating the effectiveness of this collaborative learning approach.

TRANSLATING

In process writing, the translation step entails translating thoughts into words rather than converting them from one language to another, as Hayes and Flower (1980, 1996) have emphasized. To put it simply, it marks the initial draft writing phase. Having each created an outline, the students began writing their essays based on this blueprint. They utilized Jinshan Docs, a collaborative document platform analogous to Google Docs, to facilitate group writing during this translation stage (Zhang & Wang, 2023). The students worked together on their compositions, engaging in face-to-face discussions. They crafted a robust first draft by carefully selecting precise words, crafting powerful phrases, and organizing their paragraphs.

More proficient students were encouraged to lend their expertise to those less skilled in developing word choice and topic sentences. This collaborative learning approach propelled the group forward, as less proficient students received additional guidance and support while proficient students consolidated their skills by assisting others. This nurturing learning environment bolstered the group's collective motivation and enhanced the effectiveness of their learning. Peer instruction skills were also observed during this translation phase, which is evident in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 5：Translating stage of process writing in Group 1

Meng　　Okay, so we've covered all the essential topics for writing. We can now begin writing. My task will be to describe the part of the campus where the park backs up to it and consider the advantages of using small animals for the environment.

Wang　　All right, so I'll be in charge of the overall introduction at the start, giving a broad overview of the campus and outlining the structure of our description. You can wait for me to look over and finish writing before moving on.

Wen　　Let me highlight the campus' river and lake scenery as I describe Fengxing Lake and Yingyue Bridge. Meng and I are in charge of the body of our description collaboratively.

Shui   If such is the case, I will write the conclusion, briefly overviewing the campus' overall ecological environment after everyone has completed their writing, emphasizing its fantastic.

Group 1 delved into the specifics of translating their descriptive essay, "The University Campus". Wang took ownership of the introductory paragraph, outlining the general picture of the campus, following their designated roles. Meng and Wen tackled the body section, each contributing vivid descriptions of various campus attractions. Subsequently, Shui was entrusted with concluding the essay and summing up the piece's essence. Each participant aimed to excel in their respective sections and showcase their strengths for their peers to emulate. In accordance with Nugroho's (2021) study, when faced with writing challenges, students sought guidance from their peers, a testament to the value of collaborative learning.

Excerpt 6 : Translating stage of process writing in Group 5

Yu   The first draft should be relatively simple, but there will be a more sophisticated final draft.

Zhou   Yes, but in our initial writing drafts, we should strive for a clear framework and refrain from employing Chinglish.

Zheng   The general plot and essay growth must be decided upon in the first draft.

Chen   Paragraph transitions should also be our focus in the first draft. The story's progression ought to make sense.

Group 5 discussed the first draft of their narrative essay, titled "The Mysterious Package". Zhou emphasized the importance of avoiding Chinglish and maintaining a clear overarching structure, even at this initial stage. Chen underscored the necessity of transitions to ensure the essay's coherence. During the translation phase, all participants collaborated, offering mutual support and clarifying points related to structure, language usage, and transitions from the discussion. This instance exemplifies the students' adept utilization of peer instruction techniques. This finding is consistent with the study by Moonma and Kaweera (2021), who commented that students and their peers mutually benefited from peer instruction in English writing.

Subsequently, peer instruction techniques were commonly utilized during the translation phase of the first draft of the writing. Students naturally shared the sections of their work that they deemed exceptional with their peers. Additionally, they imparted valuable knowledge and techniques to each other, fostering collaboration to finalize the first draft. The findings align with the study by Akhtar et al. (2019), which highlighted the use of peer instruction to enhance students' first-draft writing.

EDITING

After completing the first draft, students progressed to the crucial editing phase, focusing on proofreading. In this stage, peer learners worked together to scrutinize the first draft. Their efforts aimed to identify and smooth out imperfections, such as misspellings, grammatical errors, and phrase inconsistencies. Editing is a pivotal step in the writing process, ensuring the final document's quality and accuracy, resulting in error-free, well-structured compositions (Sangeetha, 2019).

Group members collaborated intently, identifying and rectifying any contradictions or inconsistencies in the text. They proofread each other's work, providing constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement. Their contributions encompassed insights into the essay's structure, content, and language use aimed at enhancing the overall quality. This collaborative approach allowed everyone to benefit from peer criticism learning from each other's insights. Below are some excerpts showcasing the practical application of peer instruction during the editing stage.

Excerpt 7 : Editing stage of process writing in Group 3

Sun   We can now make some advancements. Everyone wrote quite nicely, and the explanations of the effects of depleting the oil are precise and in-depth. The most important thing is to review them again and look for any mistakes.

Jia   Certain sentences, such as those at the start of the second, third, and fourth paragraphs, have repeating patterns and a tedious sentence structure that can be slightly changed. I have made the appropriate corrections to the second paragraph because it contains a lot of repetition and poor language.

Liu   The teacher gave us numerous examples of cause-effect statements in class. We might include terms like "contribute to" and "result in" to expand our vocabulary while discussing the causes.

Wu   After giving it a quick scan, I did not see any grammatical problems. We can still discuss changing a few expressions, though. Let's make one change here.

In Excerpt 7, Group 3 discussed editing their explanatory essay, "When We Run Out of Petroleum". Jia highlighted several instances of poorly chosen phrases and issues with sentence structure. Liu then contributed a list of effective cause-and-effect statements that their teacher taught. To finalize the process, they proofread the essay, ensuring the grammar was accurate. This approach allowed each individual to edit the essay to a level commensurate with their English proficiency, enabling peers to enhance their English writing skills by sharing expertise and knowledge (Camerling, 2020).

Excerpt 8 : Editing stage of process writing in Group 7

Ma   Let's talk about revising our initial draft. There seems to be an issue with the opening paragraph.

Xia   "Industrial processes and product production" seem laborious to me as well. It can be made more explicit and more concise.

Han   I concur. Examine the term "profound impacts" in the opening sentence. According to the teacher, "profound" in English denotes something profound, intense, or noteworthy. As such, it is a good word inappropriate in the essay's context.

Nie   Wonderful! We now have a much better essay.

Group 7 engaged in revising their explanatory essay, "When We Run Out of Petroleum". Their focus was refining specific expressions, streamlining overly flowery language, and ensuring the word "profound" was correct. As Nie emphasized in Excerpt 8, the peer-to-peer instruction process minimized spelling and grammar errors in their essay. The experience and knowledge they shared evidently assisted peers in enhancing their English writing performance (Camerling, 2020).

In essence, peer instruction was indispensable during the editing phase. Students actively participated in offering constructive feedback and suggestions to enhance paragraph coherence, spelling and grammatical accuracy, and sentence construction. This collaborative approach significantly improved the English writing skills of the students. This finding aligns with Nugroh's (2021) study, which underscores the importance of peer editing in producing essays with well-structured paragraphs, appropriate syntax, varied language, and relevant content.

REVISING

During the revision stage, the goal was to clarify, categorize, and standardize the writing to ensure precision in language and structure prominence, as Zhang (2022) advocated. The teacher provided a comprehensive revision checklist to facilitate a smooth integration of revision with peer instruction. As they supported each other, students addressed all the issues outlined in the checklist.

Group members collaborated diligently during the revision phase, fine-tuning the language and mechanics of their essays before submitting the final product. They scrutinized each sentence, ensuring that punctuation, grammar, and spelling were accurate while maintaining the flow and consistency of the entire essay. They also focused on the essay's logical organization, ensuring each paragraph presented the writers' arguments and supporting details while staying aligned with the thesis statement. Finally, they reviewed the entire essay to confirm it met academic requirements, featuring clear expression, precise wording, and a consistent style. Throughout this process, peer instruction skills were notably employed. Below are some excerpts that illustrate this collaborative revision process.

Excerpt 10：Revising stage of process writing in Group 5

Yu　　The plot must be both lucid and captivating. Both the scene and the people should be well-developed and vividly conveyed.

Zhou　　Yes, and the narrative voice should also be our main concern. Throughout the entire story, the tone and style should remain the same.

Zheng　　We ought to focus on the theme as well. Is it logical and clear? Do we do an excellent job of exploring it?

Chen　　Everyone made some excellent points. Our essay has become higher caliber, and the teacher will be happy. You all have taught me so much.

In Excerpt 10, Group 5 revised their narrative essay, "The Mysterious Package", focusing on developing well-rounded characters, a straightforward plot, and a consistent narrative style. They also ensured that the theme of the story remained coherent and understandable. As Chen noted at the end of Excerpt 10, the collaborative effort among peer learners significantly enhanced the essay's quality and contributed to students' writing abilities.

Peer instruction played a pivotal role during the revision process. Students offered constructive suggestions and critiques to improve their essays, working collaboratively to enhance the overall quality of the writing. Students polished their essays and honed their writing skills by incorporating peer education into their writing process. This outcome aligns with Sangeetha's (2019) assertion that through group writing sessions, students collaborate to edit their writing, ultimately improving their writing abilities.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this study aimed to explore the impact of combining process writing and peer education on the writing abilities of university EFL students. Through qualitative research methodology, this study found that peer instruction significantly and positively influences students' writing proficiency, making it a potentially efficacious teaching strategy for university-level EFL writing courses. However, future implementation and promotion of peer instruction techniques require further optimization to support EFL writing instruction in Chinese universities effectively.

The integration of peer instruction and process writing elements in EFL writing sessions demonstrated their combined effectiveness. Incorporating these elements with peer instruction skills significantly enhanced students' writing abilities and performance (Moonma & Kaweera, 2021). In line with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory, the integration of process writing and peer instruction abilities fostered the expansion of students' ZPD. Operating within this zone enabled students to reach their full developmental potential, surpassing their current capabilities (Vygotsky, 1978). Consequently, this approach propelled them towards more effective writing.

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