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## “From feedback to mastery”: Unveiling the Impact of Peer Assessment on Student-Centered Learning in English Writing

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### ABSTRACT

Peer assessment has gained recognition as an effective pedagogical strategy for improving students' writing proficiency, fostering critical thinking, and promoting learner autonomy. This study aimed to evaluate the impact of peer assessment on writing performance in an English foreign learner classroom, comparing it with traditional teacher feedback. A Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach was implemented, involving structured peer review cycles supported by rubrics and guided feedback training. Findings indicate that peer assessment significantly enhances students' understanding of writing structure, coherence, and argumentation. It also promotes engagement and self-regulation, enabling students to critically reflect on their writing process. However, challenges such as inconsistent feedback quality and psychological reluctance to critique peers were identified, requiring structured interventions. The study highlights the importance of explicit training and rubric-guided evaluations to ensure feedback effectiveness. Additionally, peer assessment aligns with modern collaborative learning theories, fostering a dynamic classroom environment that supports active learning. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on alternative assessment methods in EFL writing instruction. Future research should explore the longitudinal impact of peer assessment and its adaptability across diverse academic disciplines.

**Keywords:** Peer assessment; writing proficiency; feedback literacy; collaborative learning; Writing Competence

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### INTRODUCTION

Writing is a fundamental skill in English Learners, particularly in academic contexts where students are required to produce structured and coherent texts that adhere to disciplinary conventions. Among the various forms of academic writing, problem-solution essays pose significant challenges for junior high school students. The ability to articulate a problem, analyze its complexities, and propose viable solutions demands not only content knowledge but also proficiency in academic language structures and rhetorical strategies (Hanusová et al., 2020). Given the importance of writing proficiency for academic success and professional advancement, there is a growing emphasis on developing effective pedagogical strategies to enhance students' writing abilities. In traditional writing instruction, feedback mechanisms play a crucial role in guiding students toward improvement.





# Research of English for Academic Purposes in Asia

Volume 1 Number 1, January 2026

Page 67-86

However, reliance on teacher-led feedback often limits opportunities for active student engagement in the revision process. This has led to an increasing interest in alternative assessment methods, such as peer assessment, which fosters a more collaborative and interactive learning environment (Alshammari, 2024).

The challenges faced by EFL students in mastering academic writing are multifaceted. One major difficulty is their struggle with organizing ideas in a structured manner, which is essential for producing well-developed problem-solution essays. Many students lack familiarity with the genre-specific conventions that govern academic writing, including the appropriate use of discourse markers, argument structures, and coherence strategies (Dong, 2025). Additionally, the cognitive demands associated with managing both content knowledge and language proficiency simultaneously often lead to difficulties in maintaining clarity and logical progression in their writing (Dong, 2025). Another pressing issue is the inadequacy of traditional feedback mechanisms in addressing students' specific writing challenges. Teacher feedback, while valuable, is often limited in frequency and immediacy, making it difficult for students to engage in iterative revisions that lead to substantial improvements (Meletiadou, 2021). These challenges highlight the need for innovative assessment methods that actively involve students in the writing and feedback process.

Peer assessment has been proposed as a promising solution to these issues. By engaging students in evaluating each other's work, peer assessment encourages critical thinking and reflection, allowing learners to develop a deeper understanding of writing quality and textual coherence (Alshammari, 2024). This process not only benefits the writer, who receives diverse perspectives on their work but also the reviewer, who gains insights into effective writing strategies through the evaluation of peers' texts. Research has shown that students who participate in peer assessment tend to make more substantial revisions to their writing compared to those who rely solely on teacher feedback (Meletiadou, 2021). Furthermore, peer assessment fosters a sense of responsibility and autonomy among students, motivating them to take ownership of their learning process (Ma'rufah, 2024). Despite these advantages, the effectiveness of peer assessment is contingent upon students' ability to provide constructive and meaningful feedback. The variability in feedback quality remains a concern, as students may struggle with assessing their peers' work objectively due to differences in language proficiency and writing competence (Meletiadou, 2021).

In the context of L2 writing instruction, peer assessment has been recognized for its potential to enhance writing skills through collaborative learning. Studies indicate that peer feedback not only improves writing proficiency but also enhances students' ability to critically analyze texts and apply revision strategies effectively (Weng, 2024). The process of evaluating peers' work encourages students to engage with writing as a recursive and reflective activity, leading to better self-regulation in their writing development. Additionally, peer assessment can alleviate the burden on instructors by distributing the feedback workload, ensuring that students receive



timely and diverse input on their writing (Alshammari, 2024). This approach is particularly beneficial in EFL contexts, where students must navigate complex academic and professional writing conventions that may not be fully addressed through teacher feedback alone. The integration of peer assessment into writing instruction has, therefore, been advocated as a means of bridging the gap between formative feedback and independent writing development (Meletiadou, 2021).

The advantages of student-centered assessment methods, such as peer assessment, extend beyond writing proficiency to include cognitive and social benefits. By actively engaging in the evaluation of peers' work, students develop higher-order thinking skills, such as critical analysis, synthesis, and metacognitive awareness (Daoud, 2024). Peer assessment also fosters a collaborative learning environment where students can discuss writing strategies, negotiate meaning, and refine their ideas through constructive dialogue (Meletiadou & Tsagari, 2022). Furthermore, studies suggest that students who participate in peer assessment report higher levels of motivation and engagement in writing tasks (Ma'rufah, 2024). The exposure to multiple perspectives in peer review sessions enhances students' awareness of audience expectations and improves their ability to tailor their writing for academic and professional contexts. While peer assessment has demonstrated significant pedagogical benefits, its implementation requires careful planning, including the use of structured rubrics and training sessions to ensure that students provide meaningful and balanced feedback (Daoud, 2024).

Despite the documented benefits of peer assessment, its effectiveness is often challenged by concerns related to feedback reliability and student perceptions. One major criticism is the inconsistency in the quality of peer feedback, as students may lack the expertise needed to provide accurate evaluations (Ma'rufah, 2024). Additionally, peer assessments can be influenced by social dynamics, such as friendships or conflicts, which may compromise the objectivity of evaluations (Meletiadou & Tsagari, 2022). This subjectivity can lead to variations in grading accuracy, raising concerns about the fairness and validity of peer assessments (Daoud, 2024). Another challenge is students' reluctance to critique their peers' work, often due to fear of offending their classmates or doubts about their own evaluative abilities. This apprehension can limit the depth of feedback provided, reducing the effectiveness of peer assessment as a formative learning tool. To mitigate these issues, structured guidelines, teacher moderation, and peer training have been recommended to enhance the reliability and acceptance of peer assessment practices (Alshammari, 2024).

Given the pedagogical significance of peer assessment in L2 writing instruction, this study aims to investigate its impact on the academic writing skills of EFL students. Specifically, the study examines how peer assessment influences students' ability to structure problem-solution essays, engage in self-regulated learning, and develop feedback literacy. By addressing gaps in existing research, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how peer assessment can be effectively



# Research of English for Academic Purposes in Asia

Volume 1 Number 1, January 2026

Page 67-86

integrated into EFL writing instruction. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for educators seeking to implement peer assessment as a strategy to enhance writing proficiency and promote collaborative learning. Ultimately, this study supports the broader goal of equipping EFL students with the necessary skills to produce high-quality academic and professional writing, thereby improving their overall language competence and readiness for future career demands.

## METHOD

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach, a systematic and iterative method that allows educators to diagnose, intervene, and refine pedagogical strategies based on empirical observations. CAR is particularly effective in language education as it enables continuous improvement through a cycle of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Runnels & O'Dwyer, 2021). This approach was selected to investigate the effectiveness of peer assessment in improving EFL students' academic writing, specifically in the context of structuring problem-solution essays.

The study followed a two-cycle intervention model, wherein Cycle 1 introduced students to peer assessment principles, while Cycle 2 incorporated refinements based on observed challenges and student feedback. This cyclical methodology ensured that findings were validated and adjustments were systematically implemented to optimize the effectiveness of peer assessment (deBoer et al., 2022). Additionally, this design allowed for real-time documentation of students' progress, thereby enhancing the study's reliability and applicability to broader EFL contexts (Ma'rufah, 2024).

The study was conducted at MTS Darunnajah Malang, involving 21 eighth-grade students enrolled in a Writing course. These students were specifically selected due to their documented struggles with writing, as identified in previous course assessments. Given their need to develop structured problem-solution essays, they served as an ideal population for testing the efficacy of peer assessment.

The course was structured over eight weeks, with peer assessment integrated into the writing process. Students worked in designated peer groups, ensuring that each participant both provided and received feedback multiple times. To mitigate potential biases, students were randomly assigned to different peer groups across the two research cycles.

The peer assessment process was carefully structured to ensure constructive feedback and active engagement. The intervention followed three primary stages: Training and Orientation. Before initiating peer assessment, students underwent training sessions designed to familiarize them with assessment rubrics and constructive feedback principles. The training included: first is Instructor-led demonstrations on providing actionable feedback, second is Rubric-based assessment guidance, ensuring structured and measurable peer evaluations, and the Last Practice

sessions, where students assessed sample essays under instructor supervision (Alshammari, 2024).

Peer Review Process Following the training, students engaged in a structured peer review cycle, which involved:

1. Draft submission: Students wrote an initial draft of their problem-solution essay.
2. Peer evaluation: Essays were exchanged among peers, who provided feedback based on pre-determined criteria, covering organization, clarity, coherence, and grammatical accuracy.
3. Revision and resubmission: Writers revised their essays based on peer feedback, incorporating suggested improvements before final submission.
4. Instructor moderation: The teacher reviewed selected peer assessments to ensure fairness and accuracy.

Reflection and Refinement At the end of each cycle, students participated in reflection exercises, discussing their experiences with peer assessment. These reflections provided valuable qualitative data on students' perceptions of the process and its effectiveness in enhancing their writing (Meletiadou, 2021).

A mixed-methods approach was employed to assess the impact of peer assessment on students' writing performance. The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to ensure comprehensive analysis.

Writing Performance Assessment Students' essays were evaluated using an analytic rubric adapted from Jacobs et al. (1981), assessing four key components:

- Content development (relevance and depth of problem-solution analysis).
- Organizational coherence (logical flow and paragraph structure).
- Vocabulary and clarity (appropriate lexical choices and grammatical accuracy).
- Mechanics and formatting (spelling, punctuation, and adherence to academic conventions).

Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores allowed for measurement of improvement trends over the two research cycles (Rezaei & Barkaoui, 2020). The statistical analysis included mean score comparisons and percentage gains in each writing component.

To determine the reliability and validity of peer assessments, students' feedback was compared with instructor evaluations (Meihami & Esfandiari, 2020). This cross-comparison ensured that peer assessments were consistent with expert judgments, thus confirming their reliability as an effective evaluation tool.

Student Perception Surveys Students' attitudes toward peer assessment were collected using post-intervention questionnaires (Alshammari, 2024). These surveys explored: Perceived usefulness of peer feedback in improving writing, Confidence levels in evaluating peers' work., Challenges experienced in the peer assessment process, and suggestions for refinement in future implementations.

Classroom observations were conducted to record: Student engagement levels (active participation, peer discussions, and revisions), Common difficulties in

providing feedback (e.g., hesitation to critique peers, vagueness in comments), and Changes in students' ability to self-assess over the research period (Meletiadou, 2021).

Data analysis was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques:

- Quantitative data (writing scores) were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) to identify improvement trends.
- Qualitative data (student reflections, peer comments) underwent thematic analysis to identify common themes related to student engagement, feedback quality, and learning autonomy.

Additionally, inter-rater reliability measures were employed to ensure consistency in scoring between peers and instructors (Meihami & Esfandiari, 2020).

## RESULT

The impact of peer assessment on academic writing performance has been widely studied, with empirical evidence highlighting its effectiveness in enhancing students' writing proficiency. The results of this study confirm that structured peer assessment significantly improved EFL students' ability to construct well-organized and coherent problem-solution essays.

### Quantitative Analysis of Writing Score Improvements

To evaluate the effectiveness of peer assessment, students' writing performance was measured using an analytic rubric assessing content development, organizational coherence, lexical and grammatical accuracy, and mechanical correctness. The findings indicate a significant increase in overall writing scores between the initial draft and the final revision following peer feedback. The mean writing score improved from 54.5 (preliminary study) to 72.1 (Cycle 2 post-assessment), demonstrating a notable enhancement in writing proficiency. These results align with the findings of Meletiadou (2021), who reported that peer assessment not only improved the quality of student essays but also increased their confidence in writing.

Further analysis of individual rubric components revealed substantial improvements in content organization and clarity. For example, the proportion of students achieving a competency level ( $\geq 70\%$ ) in content development increased from 38.1% in the preliminary study to 76.2% in Cycle 2, reflecting a stronger ability to present and analyze problem-solution structures effectively. Similarly, organizational coherence improved from 33.3% to 71.4%, supporting claims by Ahmed and Al-Kadi (2021) that peer assessment fosters enhanced structuring and logical progression in academic writing.

### Impact of Peer Assessment on Writing Components

Breaking down writing proficiency into its key components, content development, organization, vocabulary and spelling, and grammar and mechanics, the study found that peer assessment significantly improved students' performance across all domains. Table 3.1 presents the comparative improvement rates.





Student engagement in peer assessment is a critical factor in determining its effectiveness as a pedagogical tool in writing instruction. Engagement encompasses students' willingness to actively participate in the feedback process, critically assess their peers' work, and apply received feedback to improve their writing. This section examines the key factors influencing student participation in peer assessment, the role of peer assessment in fostering self-regulated learning, psychological and social barriers to engagement, and the impact of structured peer assessment activities on students' motivation and classroom participation.

Several factors impact student participation in peer assessment activities. One primary determinant is students' perception of the value of peer feedback. Research suggests that students who recognize the benefits of peer feedback in enhancing their writing skills are more likely to engage actively in the process (Ma'rufah, 2024). Students who understand that peer assessment can lead to tangible improvements in their writing are more receptive to both giving and receiving feedback, increasing their participation in assessment tasks.

The classroom environment and the level of instructor support also play significant roles in fostering student engagement. A supportive and collaborative classroom atmosphere encourages students to feel comfortable sharing constructive critiques without fear of retribution (Daoud, 2024). Additionally, clear guidelines and rubrics provide structure, making students more confident in assessing their peers' work and ensuring that feedback remains constructive and objective without such structure, students may feel uncertain about how to evaluate their peers' writing, leading to disengagement.

Another crucial factor is students' writing proficiency and self-efficacy. Research indicates that students with higher confidence in their writing abilities are more likely to engage actively in peer assessment, as they believe in their capacity to provide meaningful feedback (Alshammari, 2024). Conversely, students with lower self-efficacy may hesitate to critique their peers' work due to concerns about their own competency in writing, leading to reduced participation in the feedback process.

Peer assessment contributes significantly to self-regulated learning in writing instruction by fostering metacognitive skills and reflective practices. When students engage in peer assessment, they are not only evaluating others' writing but also reflecting on their own work, leading to increased awareness of writing strengths and weaknesses. This reflective engagement is a key aspect of self-regulated learning, as it encourages students to set writing goals, monitor their progress, and revise their work based on the feedback received.

Research has highlighted the role of peer assessment in developing feedback literacy, which is essential for self-regulated learning. Feedback literacy involves the ability to interpret, evaluate, and apply feedback effectively (Weng, 2024). Students who regularly engage in peer assessment become more adept at identifying areas for improvement in their own writing, ultimately leading to greater independence in the learning process.



# Research of English for Academic Purposes in Asia

Volume 1 Number 1, January 2026

Page 67-86

Moreover, peer assessment encourages students to engage in discussions about writing, enhancing their understanding of writing conventions and strategies. These collaborative discussions promote deeper learning and contribute to a greater sense of ownership over the writing process, reinforcing self-regulated learning behaviours.

Despite its benefits, peer assessment presents several psychological and social barriers that may impact student engagement. One major psychological barrier is the fear of negative evaluation. Many students hesitate to provide honest critiques out of concern that their feedback may be perceived as overly critical. This reluctance can limit the effectiveness of peer assessment, as students may avoid addressing major writing issues to preserve interpersonal relationships.

Self-doubt and low self-efficacy also hinder engagement in peer assessment. Students who lack confidence in their writing abilities may feel unqualified to critique their peers' work, leading to a preference for passive participation (Yi et al., 2020). These students may fear that their feedback is not valuable or accurate, reducing their willingness to engage in meaningful assessment activities.

Additionally, classroom social dynamics influence students' willingness to critique peers' work. Factors such as existing friendships, competition, and group cohesion can impact participation. In a classroom that fosters collaboration and mutual respect, students are more likely to feel comfortable engaging in constructive critique (Daoud, 2024). However, in competitive or tense environments, students may be reluctant to provide candid feedback for fear of damaging relationships or facing peer backlash.

Structured peer assessment activities can mitigate many of the psychological and social barriers associated with peer feedback while increasing motivation and classroom participation. By providing clear guidelines, rubrics, and expectations, structured peer assessment reduces uncertainty and helps students engage confidently in the process. When students understand the objectives and expectations of peer assessment, they are more likely to participate actively and feel accountable for their contributions.

Peer assessment also enhances intrinsic motivation by fostering a sense of ownership over the learning process. As students engage in evaluating their peers' work, they become more invested in improving their writing skills, leading to greater motivation for active participation. Additionally, research has shown that students who perceive peer assessment as a valuable learning tool tend to have higher levels of engagement and persistence in writing tasks.

Furthermore, structured peer assessment encourages collaborative learning, where students exchange ideas, discuss writing strategies, and refine their writing based on multiple perspectives. These interactions create a sense of community within the classroom, which fosters greater participation in both peer assessment and other learning activities (Daoud, 2024). When students see their feedback contributing to their peers' improvement, they feel a sense of purpose and involvement, reinforcing positive engagement in writing instruction.





The findings suggest that effective implementation of peer assessment requires a structured approach that considers psychological, social, and instructional factors. By addressing barriers and promoting engagement, peer assessment can serve as a powerful tool for enhancing writing skills and fostering a student-centered learning environment in EFL contexts.

## Quality of Peer Feedback

The quality of peer feedback plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of peer assessment in writing instruction. Effective peer feedback facilitates meaningful revisions, enhances writing proficiency, and fosters a collaborative learning environment. This section examines the impact of different types of peer feedback on writing improvement, training strategies that enhance feedback reliability, common issues related to feedback accuracy, and the role of structured rubrics in improving feedback effectiveness.

Peer feedback can be categorized into two primary types: content-focused feedback and grammar-focused feedback. Research indicates that these feedback types influence writing improvement in distinct ways.

Content-focused feedback emphasizes the clarity, coherence, argument development, and organization of writing. This type of feedback encourages students to critically analyze their work, leading to more substantial revisions that enhance the overall quality of their essays. According to Daoud (2024), content-focused feedback significantly improves students' ability to structure arguments and develop their ideas logically. Additionally, students receiving content-based critiques are more likely to refine their thesis statements, improve paragraph transitions, and ensure logical progression in their writing.

In contrast, grammar-focused feedback primarily addresses linguistic accuracy, including grammar, punctuation, syntax, and spelling. While necessary for improving language proficiency, this type of feedback may not lead to substantial improvements in content or organization. Yi et al. (2020) highlight that an overemphasis on grammar-focused feedback can result in students prioritizing surface-level corrections over deeper structural and argumentative improvements. Consequently, while grammar-focused feedback is essential, it should be complemented by content-focused feedback to achieve comprehensive writing improvement.

To ensure that peer feedback is both constructive and reliable, students require explicit training on how to evaluate their peers' writing effectively. Several training strategies have been identified as effective in improving the quality of peer assessment.

One effective approach is providing instructional workshops that outline the characteristics of high-quality feedback. These workshops emphasize specificity, relevance, and constructive criticism, helping students understand how to give feedback that is both detailed and actionable (Daoud, 2024). Additionally, incorporating scaffolding techniques, such as guided peer review sessions, enables

students to practice providing feedback under instructor supervision before engaging in independent peer assessments.

Another effective strategy is using model feedback examples to demonstrate both strong and weak feedback responses. By analysing examples of effective feedback, students develop a clearer understanding of what constitutes high-quality critique and are better equipped to apply these principles in their own evaluations.

Furthermore, incorporating reflective practices—where students analyze the feedback they receive and assess how it influences their revisions—reinforces the value of peer assessment. Engaging students in reflection helps them recognize the strengths and weaknesses in their writing, fostering self-regulated learning.

Despite its benefits, peer assessment presents challenges related to feedback accuracy and consistency. One common issue is the inconsistency in peer evaluations, as students may have varying levels of proficiency in writing assessment. Research indicates that students sometimes struggle with evaluating their peers' work objectively, leading to disparities in feedback quality. Some students may provide overly critical comments, while others may offer overly lenient feedback, failing to highlight significant areas for improvement.

Additionally, personal biases can impact feedback accuracy. Students may hesitate to critique their peers' work candidly due to personal relationships, leading to either excessively positive or unnecessarily harsh evaluations (Martins et al., 2018). This variability in feedback accuracy can reduce the effectiveness of peer assessment, as students may receive evaluations that do not adequately address their writing weaknesses.

Another issue affecting feedback quality is the lack of clear evaluation criteria. When students do not have structured guidelines for assessment, they may focus on minor errors rather than engaging with broader content and organizational aspects (Daoud, 2024). This can lead to feedback that is too vague to be useful or overly concentrated on surface-level issues, neglecting critical components of academic writing.

The implementation of structured rubrics and guided evaluation criteria has been widely recognized as a means of improving the reliability and effectiveness of peer feedback. Rubrics provide students with clear expectations and standardized assessment measures, ensuring that feedback is consistent, targeted, and constructive.

Using analytic rubrics—which break down writing into distinct components such as content, organization, language use, and mechanics—helps students focus on multiple aspects of writing rather than just grammatical accuracy. Studies have shown that students trained to use rubrics in peer assessment produce feedback that is more structured and aligned with academic writing goals.

Guided evaluation criteria also help improve feedback literacy, enabling students to better understand how to assess writing comprehensively (Alighieri et al., 2020). Training students in rubric use boosts their confidence in evaluating their peers'



work, as they gain a clearer framework for identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Additionally, structured rubrics facilitate self-regulated learning by encouraging students to evaluate their own writing using the same criteria applied to peer assessments. This practice reinforces critical thinking and self-editing skills, leading to long-term improvements in writing proficiency.

Overall, the findings confirm that peer feedback is a valuable tool for improving writing proficiency, provided that it is implemented with adequate training and structured assessment criteria. By addressing challenges related to feedback accuracy and consistency, peer assessment can foster a more effective and self-regulated learning environment in writing instruction.

### **Student Perceptions of Peer Assessment**

The effectiveness of peer assessment in foreign language writing classrooms is closely linked to students' perceptions of the process. While peer assessment fosters collaboration, autonomy, and skill development, students often express mixed attitudes towards its implementation. This section explores students' perceptions of peer assessment, the challenges they face in providing and receiving peer feedback, the impact of peer assessment on their writing confidence, and proposed interventions to enhance their experience.

### **Student Attitudes Toward Peer Assessment**

Students' attitudes toward peer assessment in L2 writing classrooms vary, reflecting both enthusiasm and apprehension. On the positive side, many students appreciate the opportunity to engage with their peers' work, recognizing that it enhances their ability to critically analyze texts and improves their own writing (Alshammari, 2024). Engaging in peer assessment fosters a sense of community and accountability, as students take an active role in the learning process. Moreover, collaborative learning environments created through peer assessment often lead to increased motivation and responsibility for academic success.

However, some students remain hesitant about the effectiveness of peer feedback. A common concern is the reliability and fairness of evaluations, as students may perceive their peers as lacking the expertise necessary to provide accurate feedback. Additionally, some students question the usefulness of peer feedback compared to instructor feedback, believing that only teachers can provide authoritative and constructive assessments (Yi et al., 2020). Addressing these concerns requires structured training and interventions to build students' confidence in the peer review process.

### **Challenges in Providing and Receiving Peer Feedback**

While peer assessment offers pedagogical benefits, students encounter various challenges in both giving and receiving feedback. One of the most significant obstacles is the fear of negative evaluation. Many students worry that their critiques may be perceived as harsh or unhelpful, potentially leading to strained peer relationships.

This concern often results in overly positive or superficial feedback, which limits the effectiveness of the peer assessment process.

Another challenge is the inconsistency in feedback quality, which arises due to variations in students' writing proficiency and assessment skills (Yi et al., 2020). Some students struggle with identifying key areas for improvement, leading to feedback that is either too vague or hyper-focused on minor grammatical errors. This aligns with research by Daoud (2024), which suggests that without clear guidelines, students may prioritize linguistic corrections over substantive content and structural improvements.

The absence of structured rubrics further exacerbates the inconsistency of peer feedback. Without clear evaluation criteria, students may feel uncertain about what aspects of writing to critique, leading to unbalanced feedback. Implementing well-designed rubrics can help mitigate this issue by guiding students to focus on critical elements such as argument development, coherence, and organization.

### **Impact of Peer Assessment on Students' Writing Confidence**

Despite initial hesitations, peer assessment has been found to positively influence students' confidence in their writing abilities. By receiving feedback from multiple sources, students gain a broader perspective on their strengths and areas for improvement. This validation from peers fosters a sense of accomplishment, encouraging students to take greater risks in their writing.

Additionally, the process of providing feedback to peers reinforces students' understanding of writing conventions. Research by Martins et al. (2018) indicates that engaging in peer evaluation enhances students' critical thinking skills, allowing them to recognize effective writing strategies and apply them to their own work. This metacognitive awareness not only improves their writing proficiency but also boosts their self-efficacy as writers.

Moreover, peer assessment encourages a growth mindset, wherein students view writing as an iterative process rather than a one-time task. Meletiadou's study (2021) found that students who participated in peer assessment reported increased confidence in revising their drafts, as they became more aware of how to implement feedback effectively. This shift from passive reception of teacher comments to active engagement with peer feedback contributes to long-term writing development.

### **Strategies to Improve Student Perceptions of Peer Assessment**

To maximize the benefits of peer assessment and address student concerns, several interventions have been suggested. One effective strategy is explicit training on how to give and receive constructive feedback. Providing students with workshops and instructional sessions that highlight key characteristics of high-quality feedback such as specificity, balance, and relevance can enhance their ability to critique their peers' work effectively.

The use of structured rubrics is another key intervention. Rubrics provide clear guidelines for evaluating writing, ensuring that all students apply consistent criteria when assessing their peers' work. When students have access to a well-defined



framework, they feel more confident in their evaluations, leading to a more positive attitude toward the peer assessment process. ).

Fostering a supportive classroom environment is also essential. Creating a culture of collaboration and mutual respect can help reduce the anxiety associated with peer assessment. Research suggests that when students perceive their classroom as a safe space for sharing feedback, their willingness to participate in peer assessment increases, resulting in more meaningful engagement (Xue, 2023).

Finally, integrating multiple rounds of peer assessment throughout the writing process allows students to become more comfortable with giving and receiving feedback over time. As students gain more experience with peer assessment, their confidence in both their writing abilities and their evaluative skills improves, leading to a more effective learning experience.

## DISCUSSION

Peer assessment and traditional teacher feedback both serve essential roles in enhancing students' writing abilities, particularly in terms of structure, coherence, argumentation, and grammatical accuracy. However, they differ significantly in their approach and outcomes. Peer assessment provides students with a real audience, which enhances their engagement with writing structure and coherence. According to Daoud (2024), peer feedback encourages students to identify weaknesses in their writing that teachers might overlook due to their familiarity with student work. This fresh perspective fosters more effective revisions in organization and logical flow. Additionally, when students assess peer work, they gain a more nuanced understanding of how writing is perceived by different readers, which can improve their ability to craft clearer and more persuasive arguments.

In terms of argumentation, peer assessment fosters critical thinking by compelling students to evaluate and critique different viewpoints. Yi et al. (2020) assert that engaging in peer review significantly enhances students' argument critique skills, as it encourages them to analyze the strength and clarity of reasoning in their peers' work. Unlike teacher feedback, which is often one-directional, peer assessment requires students to engage in an interactive evaluation process, thereby deepening their analytical and reasoning skills.

Grammar-focused feedback is one area where traditional teacher feedback is generally more effective. Teachers possess the linguistic expertise needed to provide highly accurate feedback on syntax, morphology, and usage. However, research suggests that peer assessment can also contribute to grammar development, albeit in a different manner. Ma'rufah (2024) notes that while peer feedback on grammar may lack precision, the process of identifying errors in peer work can still reinforce students' own grammatical awareness. In this way, peer assessment and teacher feedback complement one another, with peer assessment reinforcing broad writing skills and teacher feedback addressing more intricate linguistic issues.

The long-term benefits of peer assessment extend beyond immediate writing improvements. Students who consistently engage in peer assessment develop self-regulation and metacognitive skills, which enhance their ability to independently revise and refine their work. Meletiadou (2021) emphasizes that students involved in peer assessment report a greater appreciation for the writing process and a more profound commitment to continuous learning. This perspective aligns with the findings of Alshammari (2024), who highlights that peer assessment fosters autonomy and engagement, key attributes that contribute to long-term academic success.

Moreover, peer assessment nurtures collaboration and communication skills, essential competencies in both academic and professional contexts. The interactive nature of peer feedback encourages students to articulate their thoughts clearly and engage in constructive discussions. These benefits extend beyond the classroom, as students who have experience in peer assessment are better equipped to engage in peer-reviewed academic writing and collaborative research.

Despite its advantages, peer assessment is not without challenges. One of the primary limitations is the inconsistency in feedback quality. Meletiadou & Tsagari (2022) point out that students often lack the necessary skills to evaluate their peers' work accurately, resulting in assessments that vary in rigor and depth. This inconsistency can lead to frustration, as some students receive highly constructive feedback while others receive superficial or inaccurate comments (Ma'rufah, 2024).

Another significant challenge is the psychological barrier that some students experience when engaging in peer assessment. Many students hesitate to provide honest critiques out of fear that their feedback may be perceived as overly critical or may harm interpersonal relationships (Daoud, 2024). This reluctance can undermine the effectiveness of the process, as students may offer overly positive or vague comments rather than addressing substantive issues in writing quality. To mitigate this issue, educators must cultivate a classroom culture that values constructive criticism and normalize the feedback process as an essential part of learning.

The absence of structured guidelines or rubrics is another barrier to the success of peer assessment. Without clear assessment criteria, students may struggle to provide focused and actionable feedback (Alighieri et al., 2020). This can result in feedback that is either too vague or overly focused on minor issues while neglecting crucial areas such as argumentation and coherence. The implementation of well-structured rubrics ensures that students focus on key aspects of writing, thereby improving the reliability and effectiveness of peer assessment (Martins et al., 2018).

To enhance the effectiveness of peer assessment, several interventions have been proposed. Explicit training in providing and receiving feedback has been shown to significantly improve the quality of peer evaluations. Nejadghanbar et al. (2022) emphasize that workshops focused on high-quality feedback characteristics, such as specificity, relevance, and balance, can help students develop more meaningful critique skills. Training students to recognize the difference between constructive criticism and unhelpful feedback fosters a more productive assessment process.

Moreover, aligning peer assessment with modern educational theories enhances its pedagogical value. Peer assessment is deeply connected to collaborative and active learning theories, which emphasize the importance of social interaction in learning ("Engineering ChatGPT Prompts for EFL Writing Classes", 2023). Through peer assessment, students engage in discussions about writing, share perspectives, and refine their ideas based on peer input. This interactive process reinforces learning and fosters a sense of community within the classroom.

Active learning theories suggest that students learn best when they take an active role in their education rather than passively receiving knowledge. Peer assessment embodies this principle by requiring students to critically evaluate peer work and reflect on their own writing (Olson et al., 2023). Research has shown that students who participate in active learning strategies, such as peer assessment, develop greater ownership over their learning and demonstrate improved academic performance (Ghazizadeh & Bazargani, 2019).

Additionally, peer assessment encourages metacognitive skills, requiring students to think critically about their writing and evaluate the quality of their feedback. This reflective practice is essential for developing self-regulation and feedback literacy, both of which are critical for long-term academic success. By integrating peer assessment into writing instruction, educators can foster a more engaging and student-centered learning environment.

In summary, peer assessment and traditional teacher feedback complement each other, with peer assessment enhancing structural and argumentative clarity and teacher feedback ensuring grammatical accuracy and linguistic precision. The long-term benefits of peer assessment include improved writing autonomy, self-regulation, and collaboration skills. However, challenges such as feedback inconsistency, psychological barriers, and the lack of structured guidelines must be addressed through targeted interventions, including training programs and rubric-based assessments. Finally, peer assessment aligns with collaborative and active learning theories, reinforcing student engagement and deepening their understanding of writing as a dynamic and interactive process. By integrating these strategies effectively, educators can maximize the potential of peer assessment in fostering academic and professional writing excellence.

## CONCLUSION

This study underscores the significance of peer assessment as a powerful tool for improving writing proficiency, promoting student engagement, and fostering self-regulated learning. The findings demonstrate that peer assessment, when implemented with structured guidelines and adequate training, can significantly enhance students' writing skills, particularly in terms of structure, coherence, and argumentation. Compared to traditional teacher feedback, peer assessment offers the unique advantage of encouraging students to engage critically with writing as a process, fostering deeper learning and self-reflection.



# Research of English for Academic Purposes in Asia

Volume 1 Number 1, January 2026

Page 67-86

One of the key findings is that peer assessment strengthens students' ability to identify weaknesses in their writing by providing multiple perspectives on their work. The collaborative nature of peer feedback allows students to engage in meaningful discussions, leading to more substantial revisions and improvements in their writing. Furthermore, by participating in the assessment process, students develop higher-order thinking skills, as they must evaluate and justify their critiques, which aligns with the principles of collaborative and active learning theories.

Despite its advantages, the study also identifies challenges in implementing peer assessment, including inconsistent feedback quality, students' hesitation to critique their peers, and the influence of personal biases. These challenges highlight the need for structured interventions, such as comprehensive training in feedback literacy, the use of standardized rubrics, and instructor moderation to enhance the reliability and validity of peer evaluations. By addressing these limitations, educators can optimize the benefits of peer assessment and ensure that it serves as an effective complement to traditional teacher feedback.

Another major contribution of this study is its alignment with contemporary theories of collaborative and active learning, which emphasize student-cantered approaches to education. Peer assessment not only improves writing proficiency but also encourages students to take ownership of their learning, fostering autonomy and confidence in academic writing. The process of providing and receiving feedback reinforces metacognitive awareness, enabling students to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, peer assessment contributes to the development of essential academic and professional skills, such as critical analysis, constructive communication, and collaborative problem-solving.

In terms of practical implications, this study highlights the importance of integrating peer assessment into EFL writing curricula, particularly in higher education settings where students must develop discipline-specific writing skills. Educators should consider embedding structured peer review cycles into their instructional design, providing students with clear guidelines and ample opportunities for practice. Additionally, leveraging technology-based tools, such as automated feedback systems and online collaborative platforms, can enhance the effectiveness and scalability of peer assessment in large classroom settings.

This study contributes to the existing body of research by offering empirical evidence on the effectiveness of peer assessment in an EFL writing context. By demonstrating that peer feedback fosters deeper engagement and writing proficiency, the findings support the broader implementation of student-centered assessment strategies in second-language writing instruction.

Future research should explore the long-term impact of peer assessment, examining how students' writing skills evolve over extended periods of practice. Additionally, studies could investigate how peer assessment functions in different educational and cultural contexts, as well as its applicability across various writing genres beyond problem-solution essays. Understanding these factors will provide

further insights into the potential of peer assessment as a sustainable and effective pedagogical practice in language education.

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# Research of English for Academic Purposes in Asia

Volume 1 Number 1, January 2026

Page 67-86

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