

## Peer Feedback in Writing: How Effective is it for English-Major Students?

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the influence of peer feedback on the writing performance of English-major students, focusing on grammatical accuracy, content development, and text coherence. It also examines the conditions that support effective peer feedback and the challenges that hinder its implementation in academic writing classes. Employing a narrative review method, this study analyzes 10 empirical research articles published between 2019 and 2024. The findings indicate that peer feedback positively enhances students' grammatical accuracy, content organization, and overall coherence of writing. In addition, it promotes learner autonomy and helps reduce writing anxiety when supported by clear guidelines, adequate training, and teacher facilitation. The effectiveness of peer feedback is further strengthened by factors such as trust among learners and appropriate scaffolding. The review is grounded in Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory and Swain's output hypothesis, which emphasize the role of interaction and self-correction in language development. Despite limitations in the reviewed studies, including small sample sizes and short research durations, this review concludes that peer feedback can be as effective as teacher feedback when properly implemented. Therefore, integrating peer review systematically into writing curricula is recommended.*

**Keywords:** Peer Feedback, Writing Skills, English-Major Students, Academic Writing.

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh umpan balik sejawat (*peer feedback*) terhadap kemampuan menulis mahasiswa pada Program Studi Bahasa Inggris, dengan fokus pada ketepatan tata bahasa, pengembangan isi, dan koherensi teks. Penelitian ini juga menelaah kondisi-kondisi yang mendukung efektivitas umpan balik sejawat serta tantangan yang menghambat penerapannya dalam kelas penulisan akademik. Dengan menggunakan metode *narrative review*, penelitian ini menganalisis 10 artikel penelitian empiris yang dipublikasikan antara tahun 2019 hingga 2024. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa umpan balik sejawat secara positif meningkatkan ketepatan tata bahasa, pengorganisasian isi, dan koherensi tulisan mahasiswa secara keseluruhan. Selain itu, umpan balik sejawat mendorong kemandirian belajar dan membantu mengurangi kecemasan dalam menulis apabila didukung oleh pedoman yang jelas, pelatihan yang memadai, serta fasilitasi dari dosen. Efektivitas umpan balik sejawat juga diperkuat oleh faktor-faktor seperti kepercayaan antar mahasiswa dan penerapan *scaffolding* yang tepat. Kajian ini didasarkan pada teori sosiokultural Vygotsky dan hipotesis *output* Swain, yang menekankan peran interaksi dan koreksi diri dalam perkembangan bahasa. Meskipun terdapat keterbatasan dalam penelitian-penelitian yang dikaji, seperti ukuran sampel yang kecil dan durasi penelitian yang singkat, kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa umpan balik sejawat dapat sama efektifnya dengan umpan balik dosen apabila diimplementasikan secara tepat. Oleh karena itu, penerapan *peer review* secara sistematis dalam kurikulum penulisan sangat direkomendasikan.

**Kata kunci:** Umpan Balik Rekan, Keterampilan Menulis, Mahasiswa Program Studi Bahasa Inggris, Penulisan Akademik.

### INTRODUCTION

Writing is an essential academic skill for university students, particularly for those enrolled in English programs. It allows learners to express their ideas, develop arguments, and communicate knowledge clearly in academic contexts (Maimunah, 2023; Vuogan & Li, 2022). However, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students continue to face difficulties in writing due to limited vocabulary, weak grammar control, and poor organization of ideas (Dharma et al., 2024; Zeng & Ravindran, 2024). According to Rossawati (2021), these limitations often lead to low confidence and

underdeveloped writing performance in EFL classrooms.

One common strategy to help students improve their writing is peer feedback, where students evaluate and comment on each other's drafts. Peer feedback has been shown to help learners revise their writing by noticing grammar errors, improving vocabulary usage, and reorganizing content more effectively (Bolourchi & Soleimani, 2021; Vuogan & Li, 2022). In addition, students who engage in giving and receiving feedback tend to develop a stronger awareness of writing structure and language use (Gonzalez & Sarango, 2023; Huisman et al., 2018). Peer feedback is also

associated with lower writing anxiety and higher motivation to revise (Bolourchi & Soleimani, 2021; Y. Wei & Liu, 2024). Recent research also highlights that students' level of engagement with peer and teacher feedback plays a crucial role in determining how effectively feedback is utilized in revising writing (Cheng et al., 2023).

The effectiveness of peer feedback can be explained through Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and support from more capable peers. When EFL students participate in peer review, they build knowledge collaboratively through discussion and reflection (Huisman et al., 2018; Y. Wei & Liu, 2024). Furthermore, metacognitive engagement during peer review has been shown to enhance learners' ability to evaluate feedback critically and apply it effectively in revision processes (Bui & Kong, 2019). Swain's output hypothesis also suggests that when learners produce written output and receive feedback, they become more aware of linguistic gaps and are encouraged to self-correct (Vuogan & Li, 2022; Zeng & Ravindran, 2024).

Despite these advantages, not all students find peer feedback effective. Some English-major students report difficulties providing constructive comments due to insufficient training or lack of confidence (Dharma et al., 2024; Rossawati, 2021). Others may doubt the validity of classmates' remarks, particularly when feedback is vague or overly general (Gonzalez & Sarango, 2023). Studies further indicate that without proper scaffolding, students may engage only superficially with feedback, limiting its impact on writing improvement (Cheng & Zhang, 2024a). While several studies demonstrate significant gains in grammar and text organization after peer review (Bolourchi & Soleimani, 2021; Zeng & Ravindran, 2024), others show only modest or inconsistent improvements (Vuogan & Li, 2022). These variations suggest that peer feedback can be beneficial, but its success depends on factors such as training quality, classroom guidance, and clarity of feedback criteria (Dharma et al., 2024; Y. Wei & Liu, 2024).

Peer feedback in writing has been widely examined in empirical studies with English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, including university students in English majors. In general, peer feedback refers to students providing comments on each other's drafts to improve linguistic features and overall writing quality (Vuogan & Li, 2022). According to Zeng and Ravindran (2024), such feedback helps learners detect grammar and sentence-level

problems, while Bolourchi and Soleimani (2021) report that it lowers writing anxiety and leads to more successful revisions. Likewise, research by Huisman et al. (2018) demonstrates that the processes of giving and receiving comments heighten students' metacognitive awareness of structure and language use, enabling clearer content organization. In addition, recent systematic reviews confirm that peer feedback contributes not only to linguistic improvement but also to students' self-regulation and active participation in writing tasks (Y. Wei & Liu, 2024).

The usefulness of peer feedback is grounded in socio-cultural learning principles, which emphasize knowledge construction through dialogue and scaffolding with more capable peers (Huisman et al., 2018; Y. Wei & Liu, 2024). During peer review, students negotiate meaning and reflect on language choices, fostering deeper engagement with written output (Zeng & Ravindran, 2024). Emerging evidence also suggests that integrating dialogic peer feedback with technological tools, such as automated feedback systems, can further enhance feedback quality and support students' self-regulated learning strategies (D. A. Yana et al., 2025). This social interaction provides opportunities for noticing linguistic gaps and encourages self-correction during revision, echoing output-oriented perspectives on language development (Vuogan & Li, 2022).

Numerous studies indicate positive effects on writing performance across linguistic and rhetorical domains. For example, Bolourchi and Soleimani (2021) observed significant gains in grammatical accuracy after structured peer review sessions, whereas Vuogan and Li (2022) showed improvements in vocabulary usage, organization, and idea development following guided peer feedback. In classroom settings, Huisman et al. (2018) found that peer review enhanced essay scores both when students provided and when they received comments, suggesting reciprocal benefits for writers and reviewers alike.

Research also explores learners' attitudes toward peer review. Although many students acknowledge its value for developing ideas and critical thinking (Gonzalez & Sarango, 2023), some remain hesitant about the reliability of peer comments, especially when feedback lacks specificity or is overly general (Rossawati, 2021). Moreover, student engagement with feedback has been identified as a key mediator that influences whether feedback is effectively internalized and applied in revisions (Cheng et al., 2023). These perceptions highlight the importance of clear

guidelines and supportive classroom environments to strengthen learners' confidence in peer review processes.

Comparative studies between peer and teacher feedback show complementary strengths. Gonzalez and Sarango (2023) reported that peer feedback encourages independent revision and higher-order thinking, whereas teacher comments tend to be more detailed regarding grammatical and lexical accuracy. Nevertheless, peer feedback can produce comparable improvements when students receive explicit criteria and modeling (Vuogan & Li, 2022; Zeng & Ravindran, 2024).

Training and support emerge as critical factors. Y. Wei and Liu (2024) found that untrained reviewers often rely on vague praise and fail to target meaningful revisions, whereas feedback quality improves markedly when learners receive rubrics, examples, and rehearsal opportunities. Similarly, metacognitive training in peer review interaction has been shown to significantly improve the depth and usefulness of students' feedback (Bui & Kong, 2019). Dharma et al. (2024) similarly observed that teacher modeling and peer-feedback workshops led to more focused, actionable comments from students. Furthermore, Maimunah (2023) concluded that incorporating explicit instruction on feedback strategies fosters greater learner autonomy and sustained engagement with revision.

Despite these benefits, the literature acknowledges several limitations. Many studies employ small samples or short-term interventions, constraining generalizability (Rossawati, 2021; Y. Wei & Liu, 2024). In addition, fewer investigations address longer-term effects across multiple writing tasks, and limited attention has been paid to how feedback is actually incorporated over time (Vuogan & Li, 2022). Recent studies also call for deeper exploration of how different feedback modes—such as peer, teacher, and automated feedback—can be effectively integrated to maximize learning outcomes (D. A. Yana et al., 2025).

In summary, existing studies indicate that peer feedback supports improvements in grammar, vocabulary, organization, and writing confidence (Bolourchi & Soleimani, 2021; Zeng & Ravindran, 2024). It also promotes learner autonomy, critical thinking, and collaborative learning (Dharma et al., 2024; Huisman et al., 2018). Yet, despite these positive outcomes, three critical gaps remain. Although prior work highlights the importance of training and guidance, further investigation is required to clarify the precise learning environment under which peer feedback is most effective including

factors such as rubric design, teacher scaffolding, and peer-review formats. Many studies briefly mention obstacles such as vague comments or low student trust, but few provide a systematic account that identifies the common challenges that limit peer feedback's success in writing classes and how these challenges might be mitigated. Addressing these gaps, through context-specific research in English programs, this study seeks to answer the following questions: (1) how does peer feedback affect the writing performance of English-major students, (2) what factors contribute to its effectiveness, and (3) what challenges arise during its implementation and how can they be addressed?

## METHOD

This study uses a narrative review methodology to examine the effectiveness of peer feedback in improving the writing performance of English-major students. A narrative review is a descriptive and interpretative approach to synthesizing existing literature, allowing researchers to discuss and integrate findings from diverse studies without strict methodological constraints (Rother, 2007). This approach is particularly suitable for capturing variations in research design, participant characteristics, and instructional contexts commonly found in EFL writing studies. It enables the exploration of how peer feedback contributes to writing performance—particularly in content development, organization, and revision practices—as well as the conditions and challenges that influence its effectiveness.

The data for this review were collected through a targeted literature search conducted using academic databases such as Google Scholar and ResearchGate. Keywords included “peer feedback,” “peer review in EFL writing,” “English-major students,” “writing performance,” and “student writing development.” The search was limited to journal articles published in English between 2019 and 2024 that focused on peer feedback in college or university-level writing instruction. Articles were selected based on their empirical nature, relevance to writing development, and inclusion of student learning outcomes, while studies focusing solely on teacher feedback or non-writing skills were excluded.

From an initial pool of 35 articles, ten were selected following a review of titles, abstracts, and full texts. Then, from each selected article, relevant data were extracted, including participant characteristics, types of peer feedback (e.g., written, oral, or guided),

writing tasks, instructional procedures, and reported outcomes.

The data were analyzed using thematic synthesis to identify recurring patterns across studies. The analysis revealed three major themes: (1) the effect of peer feedback on writing performance, particularly in content quality, organization, and revision; (2) factors contributing to effective peer feedback, such as training, feedback design, and student engagement; and (3) challenges in implementation, including issues of feedback quality, student confidence, and trust in peer evaluation. The reviewed studies represent diverse EFL contexts, including Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, and China. Together, these findings provide a synthesized understanding of how peer feedback supports writing development while highlighting the pedagogical conditions required for its effective implementation in English program contexts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

This section reports the findings of a narrative review that synthesised ten empirical

investigations of peer feedback in English-language writing classes. All ten studies were published between 2019 and 2024 and were conducted in higher-education settings where English is learned as a foreign language. Six of the investigations originated in Indonesian contexts, while the remainder were carried out in Vietnam, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, and China. Although the research designs varied, most were quasi-experimental or mixed-method enquiries that combined pre- and post-testing with learner interviews, rubric-based text analysis, and classroom observations. Participant groups ranged from college students, undergraduates to pre-service English teachers. Writing tasks included paragraph development, short essays, and literature-review sections, allowing each study to gauge both micro-linguistic accuracy (grammar and lexis) and macro-organisational quality (cohesion and rhetorical structure). Peer feedback served as the central pedagogic intervention in every inquiry, either as a complement to teacher commentary or, in several cases, as the sole source of formative input.

**Table 1. Overview of the Ten Empirical Studies Analysed**

No.	Authors & Year	Context & Sample	Data Sources	Focus of Writing Task	Principal Findings
1	Kuyyogsuy (2019)	Thailand; 21 English-major students	Mixed-method experiment; pre/post writing tests and self-written reflection	Narrative paragraphs	Peer feedback improved students' writing ability and they were motivated to participate in writing activity.
2	Sumekto & Setyawati (2019)	Indonesia; 55 pre-service teachers	Quantitative quasi-experimental; pre/post tests and peer feedback instruments	Collaborative writing	Experimental (peer-feedback) groups outperformed control on global writing quality.
3	Kusumaningrum et al. (2019)	Indonesia; 55 English-major students	Quantitative causal-comparative; pre/post tests	Opinion essays	In-class and small group peer feedback provisions led to the students' better writing performance.
4	Ho et al. (2020)	Vietnam; 92 English-major students	Qualitative case study; process-oriented writing cycle	Academic paragraphs and essays	Peer comments were mostly revision-oriented and writing quality was significantly improved among both low- and high-level writers.
5	Ginting & Fithriani (2022)	Indonesia; 20 English-major students	Qualitative case study; questionnaires and interviews	Essays	Students exhibited positive sentiments toward peer and automated writing evaluation, with a stronger preference for peer feedback.
6	Cendani & Purnamaningwulan (2023)	Indonesia; 18 micro-teaching trainees	Qualitative thematic analysis	Lesson-plan reflections	Trainees valued feedback but reported reluctance, time pressure, and unequal participation.
7	Al Harbi (2023)	Saudi Arabia; 34 English-major students	Quantitative descriptive; questionnaires and interviews	Essays	Students preferred peer review to group review, self-review, and portfolio-based writing assessments.
8	Aimah et al. (2023)	Indonesia; 11 pre-service teachers	Mixed-method; focus-group interviews	Micro-teaching journals	Supervisor feedback deemed linguistically authoritative; peer feedback fostered reflection.

9	Yan et al. (2024)	China; 30 post-graduates	Mixed-method experiment; pre/post essays and surveys	Literature-review writing	Adopted peer comments predicted gain scores; specificity of suggestions was decisive.
10	Suryanti & Musyafaah (2024)	Indonesia; 60 tertiary EFL learners	Mixed-method; rubric scores and interviews	Academic essays	Long-term integration of peer feedback with rubrics improved coherence and self-editing.

To contextualize the descriptive profile of the selected empirical studies as shown in Table 1, it is essential to consider their methodological orientation, publication trends, and participant characteristics. Of the ten empirical sources, four adopted mixed-method frameworks triangulated test results with interviews or classroom artefacts (Chen & Yang, 2019; Kuyyogsuy, 2019; Suryanti & Musyafaah, 2024; Yan et al., 2024), three employed quantitative approaches—using pre- and post-test essay scores or rating-scale data (Alharbi, 2023; Kusumaningrum et al., 2019; Sumekto & Setyawati, 2019)—while the other three used qualitative case studies and thematic analysis (Cendani & Purnamaningwulan, 2023; Ginting & Fithriani, 2022; Ho et al., 2020). Publication frequency is heavily clustered in the 2019–2024 window, reflecting a recent surge of interest in peer-mediated writing support within Indonesian tertiary education. Sample sizes vary from 11 to 92 participants, yet all investigations focus on writers at an intermediate or early-advanced proficiency.

Methodologically, thematic synthesis is used in narrative reviews to identify patterns, key themes, and recurring issues across various research findings. In this context, the thematic synthesis revealed several consistent trends across studies examining peer feedback in EFL writing.

### **Peer Feedback Effect on Writing Performance**

Several studies have examined how peer feedback contributes to the improvement of writing performance among English-major students, particularly in terms of content development, organization, and revision quality. For instance, Sumekto and Setyawati (2019) found that peer feedback significantly improved students' writing scores, especially in idea development and coherence. Similarly, Suryanti and Musyafaah (2024) demonstrated that structured peer feedback contributed to measurable gains in academic writing quality in a tertiary context.

Further support is provided by Yan et al. (2024), who revealed that peer feedback enhances students' ability to write literature reviews by promoting deeper engagement with sources and improving argumentative

structure. Likewise, Kusumaningrum et al. (2019) showed that different types of peer feedback (e.g., direct vs. indirect) influence writing outcomes, with more explicit feedback leading to greater revisions.

In addition, studies such as Ho et al. (2020) and Kuyyogsuy (2019) highlight that peer feedback supports writing revision processes, enabling learners to identify weaknesses and refine their drafts more effectively. However, improvements in grammatical accuracy tend to be less consistent, as students often lack sufficient linguistic competence to provide precise corrective feedback.

From a perception perspective, Aimah et al. (2023) and Ginting & Fithriani (2022) indicate that students generally view peer feedback as beneficial for idea generation and collaborative learning, although many still prefer teacher or automated feedback for accuracy and reliability. This suggests that while peer feedback enhances higher-order writing skills, its effectiveness in lower-level accuracy remains limited.

### **Factors Contributing to Effective Peer Feedback**

The effectiveness of peer feedback is influenced by several interrelated factors, with training and guidance emerging as the most critical. Studies such as Suryanti & Musyafaah (2024) and Ho et al. (2020) emphasize that students produce more meaningful and usable feedback when they are provided with clear rubrics, models, and structured procedures. Without such scaffolding, feedback tends to be superficial and less impactful.

Another important factor is the type and quality of feedback provided. Kusumaningrum et al. (2019) found that explicit and focused feedback leads to more substantial revisions compared to vague or general comments. Similarly, Yan et al. (2024) highlight that feedback aligned with task objectives (e.g., argumentation in literature reviews) is more likely to be implemented by students.

Student-related factors also play a significant role. Aimah et al. (2023) note that learners' confidence, language proficiency, and prior experience affect both the quality of feedback they give and their willingness to accept peer suggestions. In addition, Alharbi

(2023) suggests that combining peer feedback with other forms of feedback (e.g., teacher feedback) creates a more balanced and effective learning environment.

Finally, the learning environment and interaction patterns contribute to success. Collaborative settings that encourage discussion and negotiation of meaning, as noted in Kuyyogsuy (2019), foster deeper engagement and critical thinking, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of peer feedback.

**Challenges in Implementing Peer Feedback and the Coping Strategies**

Despite its benefits, the implementation of peer feedback presents several challenges. A major issue identified in Cendani & Purnamaningwulan (2023) is students' lack of confidence in evaluating peers' work, which often results in hesitation, overly general comments, or avoidance of critical feedback. This is closely related to students' limited linguistic competence and fear of making mistakes.

Another recurring challenge is the perceived reliability of peer feedback. Studies such as Ginting & Fithriani (2022) show that students tend to trust teacher or automated feedback more, particularly for grammatical correction, leading to selective use of peer suggestions. Similarly, Aimah et al. (2023) report that students question the credibility of peer comments when feedback providers are seen as equally inexperienced.

Time constraints and lack of structured implementation also hinder effectiveness. As highlighted by Cendani and Purnamaningwulan (2023), unstructured peer-review sessions

often lead to minimal engagement and low-quality feedback.

To address these challenges, several coping strategies are proposed across the studies. First, explicit training and continuous practice are essential to improve students' feedback skills. Second, the use of rubrics and guided questions helps students focus on specific aspects of writing. Third, integrating peer feedback with teacher supervision or complementary feedback systems, as suggested by Alharbi (2023), enhances reliability and learning outcomes. Lastly, fostering a supportive learning environment can reduce anxiety and encourage more honest and constructive peer interaction.

Building on the thematic findings presented above—particularly the positive impact of peer feedback on writing performance, the importance of training and feedback quality, and the challenges related to students' confidence and trust—the reviewed studies also reveal variations in how peer feedback is implemented across different contexts. To provide a clearer and more structured overview of these methodological patterns, Table 2 summarizes the key variables across the ten studies, including feedback mode, training provision, outcome measurement, comparison groups, and sustainability of implementation. This comparative synthesis not only highlights recurring practices but also clarifies how such variations may account for the differences in findings reported earlier, thereby offering a more integrated understanding of the effectiveness of peer feedback in EFL writing contexts.

**Table 2. Comparative Variables across the Ten Studies**

Variable	Consistent Features	Divergent Features	Implications
<b>Feedback Mode</b>	Written peer feedback is dominant in most studies (e.g., Sumekto & Setyawati, 2019; Suryanti & Musyafaah, 2024; Yan et al., 2024)	Some studies incorporate blended or multiple feedback modes, including peer + teacher or peer + AWE (Aimah et al., 2023; Ginting & Fithriani, 2022; Alharbi, 2023)	Written feedback supports revision and reflection, while combining modes enhances feedback reliability and depth
<b>Training Provided</b>	Several studies include rubric-based guidance or structured peer-review procedures (Ho et al., 2020; Suryanti & Musyafaah, 2024; Kuyyogsuy, 2019)	Other studies report limited or implicit training, resulting in less focused feedback (Cendani & Purnamaningwulan, 2023)	Explicit training improves feedback quality, specificity, and students' ability to apply comments in revision
<b>Measurement of Outcomes</b>	Most studies assess writing performance using analytic rubrics (content, organization, vocabulary, grammar) (Sumekto & Setyawati, 2019; Kusumaningrum et al., 2019; Yan et al., 2024)	Some studies also examine perceptions and preferences toward feedback (Aimah et al., 2023; Ginting & Fithriani, 2022; Alharbi, 2023)	Combining performance and perception data provides a more comprehensive understanding of peer feedback effectiveness

Variable	Consistent Features	Divergent Features	Implications
<b>Comparison Group</b>	Several studies compare peer feedback with teacher feedback or alternative feedback sources (Aimah et al., 2023; Kusumaningrum et al., 2019; Alharbi, 2023)	Other studies use single-group or exploratory designs without control groups (Cendani & Purnamaningwulan, 2023; Kuyyogsuy, 2019)	Comparative designs clarify the strengths and limitations of peer feedback relative to other feedback types
<b>Sustainability</b>	Multi-draft writing cycles with peer review are commonly implemented (Ho et al., 2020; Suryanti & Musyafaah, 2024; Yan et al., 2024)	Some studies involve shorter or single-cycle interventions (Cendani & Purnamaningwulan, 2023)	Repeated feedback cycles enhance students' revision skills and long-term writing development

A close reading of Table 2 reinforces the patterns identified in the thematic analysis, particularly the central role of structured training, clear rubrics, and iterative drafting cycles in determining the success of peer feedback. Studies that incorporated guided procedures and multiple rounds of revision (e.g., Ho et al., 2020; Suryanti & Musyafaah, 2024; Yan et al., 2024) consistently reported more substantial and sustained improvements in students' writing. In contrast, contexts with minimal guidance tended to produce less focused feedback and greater student uncertainty (Cendani & Purnamaningwulan, 2023). These findings align with broader evidence that student engagement with feedback is strongly mediated by instructional design and scaffolding, rather than the feedback source alone (Cheng et al. 2023; Cheng & Zhang 2024a).

**Discussion**

The ten empirical studies demonstrate that peer feedback, when systematically implemented, contributes to improvements in writing quality, particularly in content development, organization, and revision practices. While gains in grammatical accuracy are less consistent, peer feedback plays a significant role in fostering metacognitive awareness and active engagement in the writing process, as students learn by both giving and receiving feedback (Ho et al., 2020; Yan et al., 2024). This is further supported by recent syntheses indicating that peer feedback promotes cognitive, behavioral, and affective engagement in L2 writing, which are essential for long-term development (Cheng et al., 2023; L. Wei & Liu, 2024).

However, the effectiveness of peer feedback remains contingent upon several key conditions. One of the most critical factors is the quality of feedback, which depends heavily on students' training and familiarity with assessment criteria. Studies such as Suryanti & Musyafaah (2024) and Ho et al. (2020) show that when students are equipped with rubrics

and explicit instruction, they are more capable of producing specific and actionable comments. Conversely, without adequate preparation, feedback tends to be vague and less useful (Cendani & Purnamaningwulan, 2023). Additionally, students' trust in peer feedback continues to influence its uptake. As reported by Aimah et al. (2023) and supported by Ginting & Fithriani (2022), learners often perceive teacher or automated feedback as more reliable, particularly for linguistic accuracy. This perception echoes findings from recent studies highlighting the need to combine peer feedback with teacher or technological support to enhance credibility and effectiveness (Alharbi, 2023; D. A. Yana et al., 2025).

In relation to the aim of this study, the findings confirm that peer feedback is an effective pedagogical approach for improving writing performance among English-major students, particularly when integrated with structured guidance and collaborative learning practices. Beyond improving textual features, peer feedback encourages learner autonomy, critical thinking, and self-regulated learning, as students actively evaluate and reflect on both their own and others' writing (Kuyyogsuy, 2019; Yan et al., 2024). Furthermore, this review helps clarify inconsistencies in previous research by demonstrating that variations in outcomes are largely attributable to differences in implementation conditions, such as training, feedback design, and classroom support (Cheng & Zhang, 2024b; L. Wei & Liu, 2024)

The findings also carry several important implications. Theoretically, they support sociocultural and collaborative learning perspectives, which emphasize the role of interaction, scaffolding, and shared knowledge construction in language development. Empirical evidence from both the reviewed studies and recent research (e.g., Cheng & Zhang, 2024b; L. Wei & Liu, 2024) confirms that peer feedback facilitates deeper engagement with writing tasks. Practically, the results suggest that peer feedback should be integrated as a regular and structured

component of writing instruction, supported by clear rubrics, modeling, and teacher facilitation. Teachers play a crucial role in guiding students, monitoring feedback quality, and fostering a supportive learning environment (Alharbi, 2023; Suryanti & Musyafaah, 2024).

From a policy perspective, English programs are encouraged to incorporate systematic peer feedback practices into their curricula, ensuring that students receive adequate training and ongoing support. Integrating peer feedback with digital tools or automated systems may further enhance its effectiveness and scalability, particularly in increasingly technology-mediated learning environments (W. Yana et al., 2025). These implications align with the study's novel perspective, which reconceptualizes peer feedback as a pedagogically contingent practice, where its impact on writing development is shaped more by scaffolding, feedback design, and learner engagement than by the feedback process itself. Accordingly, future research should adopt longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches to examine how peer feedback operates across different writing tasks, timeframes, and educational contexts, including digital and online settings.

Despite its contributions, this review has several limitations. First, it is based on ten empirical studies published between 2019 and 2024, which may not fully represent the broader body of research. Second, most studies were conducted in Asian EFL contexts, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Third, variations in research design, sample size, and duration may affect the comparability of results (Aimah et al., 2023; Cendani & Purnamaningwulan, 2023). Additionally, some studies rely on students' perceptions rather than objective measures of writing improvement (Ginting & Fithriani, 2022). Finally, limited attention has been given to how students process and apply feedback in actual revisions, which remains an important area for further exploration (Y. Wei & Liu, 2024; Yan et al., 2024).

## CONCLUSION

This narrative review examined the role of peer feedback in supporting the writing development of English-major students and the conditions influencing its effectiveness. Across the ten studies, peer feedback was found to enhance writing quality, particularly in content development, organization, and revision practices, while its impact on grammatical accuracy was less consistent. More importantly, peer feedback fosters metacognitive awareness, critical reflection, and active engagement, positioning students as

both reviewers and writers in a collaborative learning process.

The findings highlight that the effectiveness of peer feedback depends largely on instructional design. Structured training, clear rubrics, and iterative feedback cycles enable students to provide more meaningful comments and apply them effectively in revision. In contrast, limited guidance often results in vague feedback and reduced confidence. Persistent challenges, such as trust in peer expertise and feedback quality, further emphasize the need for teacher facilitation and scaffolding.

In sum, peer feedback represents a valuable pedagogical approach when systematically implemented. Future research should explore its long-term impact, particularly how students process and utilize feedback across multiple writing tasks and in diverse learning environments.

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