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The Effects of Peer Feedback and Self-Correction on Writing Ability: A Case of Social Network Medium

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this research were 1) to study the effects of peer feedback and self-correction on the student's writing ability; 2) to ascertain which writing aspect the student improved most and least; and 3) to investigate the student's attitudes toward peer feedback and self-correction. The samples of this study were 60 undergraduate students from the Faculty of Engineering at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok enrolled in Writing I course in the second semester of academic year 2014. Thirty students were randomly assigned to the control group employing the self-correction strategy, while 30 students in the experimental group used a peer feedback strategy via Facebook. The stratified random sampling technique was used in this study for subject selection and assignment. At the beginning of the writing course, both groups were trained for 6 hours on how to provide effective feedback to their peers and how to correct their own writing task. The writing ability test and close-ended questionnaire were used for the quantitative data collection. An independent t-test and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. To gain more in-depth data, an open-ended questionnaire and interviews were employed. The findings showed that the different types of feedback did not have a significant effect on the students' writing achievement. Additionally, the results showed that both groups had positive attitudes toward the type of feedback they experienced. However, the use of social networking a site in the writing process also yielded some promising results for EFL writing instruction.

Keywords: Peer feedback, Self-correction, Writing ability, Student's attitudes

1. Introduction

In the next year Thailand will be entering the ASEAN Economic Community, and there will be a lot of foreigners coming to Thailand for many reasons, such as business, travel, education, and the like. Without doubt, English will be the most important language at that time because it is an international language used for communicating with each other.

Among the four English skills, writing is one of the skills that Thai students always have problems with. Most Thai students have studied English for more than nine years but they still face writing problems, such as illogical organization of ideas, vocabulary use, grammatical mistakes, and spelling. However, they cannot escape the need to write in their daily life. It could be said that most people, on a typical day, practice some forms of writing (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996).

At King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok, Writing I is one of the required English courses for engineering students, and the students seem to have writing problems similar to those mentioned above. Feedback is considered important input that helps to improve students' writing ability. Wanchid (2007) claimed that using only teacher

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feedback in the writing course is not enough to improve the student's writing ability. Moreover, many researchers have investigated peer feedback in the writing course and claimed that this methodology can develop students' writing ability (Wanchid, 2013). Ting & Qian (2010) stated that peer feedback activities encourage students to become more critical readers and revisers through reading others' writings critically. Ho and Duong (2014) believe that peer feedback methods are effective and useful for teachers and students when the primary training is to be set up before starting the activity so that students can get a general picture of what they are going to do and how. Furthermore, modern technology has influences human life nowadays and social media are popular among teenagers. For this reason, it was considered interesting to integrate a famous social medium and writing pedagogy together for improving the student's writing ability in the classroom.

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To study the effects of peer feedback and self-correction on the student's writing ability.
2. To find out the areas where the students improved the most and least.
3. To investigate the attitudes of students toward peer feedback and self-correction.

1.2 Research Questions

1. Are there any significant effects between peer feedback and self-correction on students' writing ability?
2. In what areas did the students improve the most and least?
3. What are the students' attitudes toward peer feedback and self-correction?

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The posttest mean scores of the students in the control group and the experimental group are significantly different at 0.05 level.

1.4 Scope of the Study

1. The population of the study was undergraduate engineering university students from King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok in the Faculty of Engineering registered for the Writing I course during the second semester of academic year 2014.
2. The independent variables were peer feedback and self-correction.
3. The students' writing ability score was the dependent variable.
4. The three writing assignments focused on in the writing course were narrative, descriptive, and writing paragraphs giving reasons and examples.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Writing Theory

Writing is one of four skills that many people use in daily life. It is fair to say that most people on a typical day practice some form of writing, and virtually everyone in every walk of life completes an enormous number of forms. In addition, many people write for reasons unrelated to their work: letters, diaries, messages, shopping lists, budgets, etc. (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). According to Brown, a good deal of attention was placed on "model" composition that students would emulate and on how well a student's final product measured up against a list of criteria that included content, organization, vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanical considerations such as spelling and punctuation (2001, p.335). However, writing is a "process through which meaning is created" (Zamel, 1982, p.195) while White and Arndt (1991, p.3) describe writing as a form of problem-solving which involves such processes as generating ideas, discovering a 'voice' with which to write, planning, goal-

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setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written, as well as what has been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning.

2.2 Self-correction

In this study, self-correction refers to the strategy that each student has to revise a first draft of his or her own writing by using guided questions, focusing on both form-focused and meaning focused. After they finish doing self-correction activities, they have to submit the second draft to the lecturer within the due date.

Shirzad et al. (2015) conducted a research on the effects of teacher, guided, and self-error correction on EFL learners writing accuracy. All of the students had to write descriptive paragraphs on different topics during the treatment procedure. The student's writings were checked based on different treatment types. After that, the students revised their writing during each session and the teacher asked the participants to write on a new topic in the same genre. A pretest and posttest were used to check the learners' improvement. The results suggested that guided error-correction led to significant improvement in the learners' writing accuracy. The teacher's emphasis should be on tactics in error-correction, and the teacher should be very patient with the students' errors.

On the other hand, Bahrami (2002) investigated the effect of three different types of correction on the writing ability of upper-intermediate Iranian students. She studied three methods of teacher correction, self-correction (underlining), and peer correction (indicating the type of errors). The results showed that peer correction and self-correction were more effective strategies than the traditional teacher correction. Meanwhile, Ganji (2009) investigated the impacts on writing performance of teacher correction, peer correction, and self-correction with students that were chosen from among 75 IELTS candidates. From the results, he claimed that the teacher-correction method just wasted time and energy, but the two methods – self-correction and peer correction were effective in improving the writing performance and accuracy of the students.

2.3 Peer Feedback

Peer feedback is referred to by many names, for example, peer response, peer editing, peer critiquing, and peer evaluation (Keh, 1996). Each name has a focus on the feedback differently. For example, peer response may focus on the content, with peer editing nearing the final draft, with a focus on grammar.

The theoretical framework underlining peer feedback pedagogy is Vygotsky's idea of social constructivism, which learning is enhanced through social interactions where knowledge is not simply constructed but co-constructed through collaborative and cooperative learning environments, and where the learners' actual development can be reached through scaffolding by more capable people (Wanchid, 2015).

In this research, peer feedback refers to the feedback given by the students' friends that are in the same subgroup. Each student posts his or her work on his or her Facebook. The student provides and receives comments, suggestions and critiques as well as edits other friends' first draft on Facebook directly by using the Four-Step Procedure: clarifying, identifying, explaining, and giving suggestions (Min, 2006). Ho and Duong (2014) undertook research on the effectiveness of peer feedback on graduate academic writing at Ho Chi Minh City Open University. They collected data from 37 master degree students. The students were requested to write different types of paragraphs and essays, working in groups to provide comments on their peers' writing both on the local and global area. The results showed that the four most frequent types of comments were to alteration, clarification, suggestion, and explanation. The researchers believed that the peer feedback methods were effective and useful for the teachers

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and students when the primary training should be set up before starting the activity so that students can get a general picture of what they are going to do and how.

On the other hand, Ting & Qian (2010) conducted research on peer feedback in a Chinese EFL writing classroom. The objective of this study was to find out the nature of the revision of students' writing tasks after receiving peer feedback by analyzing first and second drafts measuring accuracy, fluency, grammatical complexity, and vocabulary complexity. The results revealed that peer review activities cannot guarantee the overall improvement of a piece of writing, but students can become more critical readers and revisers through reading others' writings critically.

2.4 Providing Feedback via the Online Medium

The use of the online medium as a learning tool in the classroom has been claimed to benefit students in writing courses. Shukor and Noordin (2014) compared face-to-face and Facebook collaborative writing groups in order to measure the students' writing performance. The results of the research revealed that the participants in the Facebook collaborative writing groups displayed slightly higher scores compared to the face-to-face collaborative writing groups. In addition, the use of Facebook helped the students discuss ideas with peers and provide feedback and comments on the writing activities both at the same and at different times. Furthermore, Yusof, Manan and Alias (2012) investigated the potential of use of Facebook Notes as a medium for providing peer feedback on students' written work. Planning, drafting, revising, and editing were the four stages involved in the writing process. Peer feedback guide via the Facebook Notes helped the teacher make sure that all of the students' writing pieces were reviewed at all the four stages of the writing process and consequently improved the quality of their written work.

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

The population of the present study was 150 Thai second year undergraduate Engineering students enrolled in Writing I as an elective course at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok in the second semester of academic year 2014, but the samples of this study were composed of 60 students. The student's age range was 19 to 25, with 24 males and 36 females. All of them had passed Foundation English I and II, and they had different levels of general English proficiency (high, moderate, and low). The stratified random sampling technique was used for subject selection and assignments. Based on the students' total raw scores for English II, they were classified into 3 levels of general English proficiency (high, moderate, and low).

3.2 Instruments and Data Collection

Three research instruments – writing ability test, an attitudes questionnaire, and interviews were used in this study. The writing ability test was used to serve the first two research questions, and it was constructed by the researcher. The objective of the test was to assess the student's achievement in writing after the experiment. There were three main parts: error identification, a cloze test, and paragraph writing on the topic "Please give three reasons and examples why English is necessary for the AEC." Test quality was validated by 3 experts, and the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) was 1. The students had 3 hours to complete the test. The assessment criteria for the paragraph writing section were based on Pavlik and Segal's writing profile (2007), covering five major writing components: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling and mechanics, with each one having three rating levels of *excellent*, *adequate*, and *developing*. The test was distributed at the beginning

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and the end of the course. The data were analyzed by using independent t-test.

A questionnaire and interview were used in the study to answer the third research question. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the students' responses regarding their attitudes toward peer feedback and self-correction, and it had two main parts. The students' demographic data were in the first part while the second part asked about the students' attitudes toward the use of alternative assessment by using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by 3 experts, and the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) was 1. Descriptive statistics were used for the data analysis. Interviews were arranged at the end of the experiment in order to gain a more in-depth reflection of the students' preferences, attitudes, opinions, and feelings toward peer feedback and the self-correction they received.

Table 3.1 The Experimental Process

Phases	Activities	Weeks (1-15)
I	• The students were informed which session and subgroups they belonged to, and they received the course syllabus and the details of tasks they had to do throughout the semester. Moreover, the writing ability test (pretest) was distributed to all students.	1
II	• The students in the control and experimental groups were trained in how to revise their own work or how to provide good quality feedback to their friends. The students also were asked to sign up for a Facebook account if they did not have it yet.	2 – 3

Table 3.1 (Continued)

Phases	Activities	Weeks (1-15)
III	• The students in the experimental group had to write three writing assignments, and revised their writing after receiving peer feedback. In the meantime, the control group students were assigned to write the same three writing assignments, and edited their work by themselves. Furthermore, the students had to hand in all assignments, including the feedback received from their peers, to the instructor within the due date.	4 – 13
IV	• The students had to take the writing ability test (posttest), and the questionnaires were distributed at the end of the session.	14
V	• Nine students (3 low-proficiency learners, 3 moderate-proficiency learners, and 3 high-proficiency learners) from the control group and nine students from the experimental groups were randomly selected for the interview session.	15

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3.3 Data Analysis

1. In order to answer research question 1, an independent t-test was used by employing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 11.5 to analyze the effects of peer feedback and self-correction on the students' writing ability.

2. In order to answer the research question 2, the gained score of the writing ability test in each writing component – content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling and mechanics were calculated by the t-test.

3. In order to answer the research question 3, which was to survey the student's attitudes toward the peer feedback and self-correction they experienced, the questionnaires and interview were used to collect in-depth data for the purpose of providing insight into the student's preferences, attitudes, feelings, and opinions. The students' attitudes from two groups were calculated and reported in terms of frequency, mean, and standard deviation.

4. Results of the Study

Research Question 1: Are there any significant effects between peer feedback and self-correction on the students' writing ability?

Table 4.1: The effects of the use of peer feedback and self-correction on the students' writing ability

Writing ability test	Total score	Mean	S.D	F	Sig	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest score of self-correction	60	31.10	5.73					
Pretest score of peer feedback	60	32.66	5.56	.021	.886	-1.07	58	.287
Posttest score of self-correction	60	47.53	2.95					
Posttest score of peer feedback	60	54.33	5.01	4.15	.046	-6.40	58	.000

In order to ensure that the students in the peer feedback group and the self-correction group had equal writing ability before the experiment, the writing ability of the students in the two groups was measured. The results from the t-test in Table 4.1 showed that the pretest scores of the two groups were not significantly different ($t = -1.07, p > .05$), and this meant that the writing ability of the students of the two groups was comparable. According to the first research objective, which was to study the effects of peer feedback and self-correction on the students' writing ability, the results from the t-test illustrated that the posttest scores of the students in the peer feedback group and the self-correction group were significantly different ($t = -6.40, p < .05$). Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted.

Research Question 2: In what area did the students improve most and least?

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Table 4.2 The gained score of the paragraph writing of the students in the peer feedback group

Writing components	Total score	Gained* score	S.D.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Content	15	1.57	.50	17.03	29	.00
Organization	15	1.63	.93	9.64	29	.00
Vocabulary	15	1.17	.75	8.56	29	.00
Grammar	15	1.13	.73	8.50	29	.00
Spelling and Mechanics	15	1.23	.43	15.70	29	.00

* The gained score is the differences of pretest and posttest scores.

For the peer feedback group, the results revealed that the writing component where the students improved most as organization and followed by content, with the gained score of 1.63 and 1.57 respectively. Meanwhile, the writing component where the students improved the least was grammar, with a gained score of 1.13.

Table 4.3 The gained score of the paragraph writing of the students in the self-correction group

Writing components	Total score	Gained* score	S.D.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Content	15	1.00	.79	6.95	29	.00
Organization	15	1.40	1.30	5.89	29	.00
Vocabulary	15	1.20	.66	9.89	29	.00
Grammar	15	.70	.60	6.43	29	.00
Spelling and Mechanics	15	1.00	.53	10.43	29	.00

* The gained score is the differences of pretest and posttest scores.

The findings from the self-correction group revealed that the writing component where the students showed the most improvement was organization and vocabulary, with gained scores of 1.40 and 1.20 respectively. On the other hand, the writing component where the students showed the least improvement was grammar, with a gained score of 0.70.

Research Question 3: What are the student’s attitudes toward peer feedback and self-correction?

Table 4.4 Questionnaire results regarding the benefits of self-correction

Attitudes toward the benefits of self-correction	Mean	S.D.
1. I enjoyed the self-correction activity.	3.23	0.68
2. The self-correction activity improved my writing ability.	3.93	0.52
3. Self-correction made me feel more confident about my writing.	3.57	0.73
4. The self-correction activity helped me to be more careful about spelling.	4.10	0.55
5. Self-correction encouraged me to write more.	3.57	0.63
6. I felt more confident in correcting my papers.	3.70	0.70
7. The self-correction activity gave me some ideas on unity in writing.	3.67	0.66
8. I was aware of my grammatical mistakes.	4.13	0.68

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Table 4.4 (Continued)

Attitudes toward the benefits of self-correction	Mean	S.D.
9. Self-correction gave me various ideas for correcting my writing mistakes.	3.67	0.66
10. I got more information on how to write in a better way.	3.87	0.78
Valid N (listwise)	3.74	0.66

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that the overall mean score was 3.74 (SD=0.66). This results revealed that most of the students thought that self-correction made them aware of grammatical mistakes with a mean score of 4.13 (SD=0.68), and that the self-correction activity also helped them to be more careful about spelling (Mean=4.10, SD=0.55). Meanwhile, the smallest mean score was 3.23 (SD=0.68); that is they enjoyed the self-correction activity.

Table 4.5 Questionnaire results for the problem of self-correction

Attitudes toward the problem of self-correction	Mean	S.D.
11. I thought that the idea of self-correction was a waste of time.	2.40	0.77
12. My self-correction experience was stressful.	3.30	1.12
13. Sometimes I did not like the self-correction activity.	3.37	1.03
14. I thought that my writing was perfect, so I am not sure which points I have to change.	2.63	1.13
15. I did not have ideas for developing my writing in a better way.	2.93	0.98
16. I did not think I was learning something new in the self-correction activity.	2.30	0.95
17. I felt that my self-correction was not good.	3.13	0.90
18. I felt uncomfortable doing self-correction.	2.83	0.87
19. I was afraid that my self-correction might be incorrect.	3.67	0.99
20. I could not correct my writing effectively.	3.30	0.95
Valid N (listwise)	2.99	0.97

The overall mean score for the attitudes toward the problem of self-correction was 2.99 (SD=0.97). The finding indicated that the majority of the respondents were afraid that their self-correction might be incorrect, where the mean score was 3.67 (SD=0.99). For the following item, that is, they sometimes did not like self-correction activity, the mean score was 3.37 (SD=1.03). For the last item, that they did not think that they were learning anything new in the self-correction, the mean score was 2.30 (SD=0.95). The results appear to collaborate the interviews showing that most of the students thought that the self-correction activity was useful, but all of them said it was hard for them to find their own writing problems.

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Table 4.6 Questionnaire results for the benefits of peer feedback

Attitudes toward the benefits of peer feedback	Mean	S.D.
1. I enjoyed the peer feedback activity.	4.03	0.67
2. The peer feedback activity improved my writing ability.	4.53	0.63
3. Peer feedback made me feel more confident about my writing.	4.23	0.73
4. My peers helped me to be more careful about spelling.	4.23	0.68
5. Peer feedback encouraged me to write more.	4.00	0.87
6. Peer feedback made me feel more confident in correcting my papers.	4.20	0.71
7. The peer feedback activity gave me some ideas on unity in writing.	4.37	0.76
8. I was aware of my grammatical mistakes.	4.40	0.77
9. Peer feedback gave me various ideas for correcting my writing mistakes.	4.23	0.73
10. I got more information on how to write in a better way from peer feedback.	4.30	0.70
Valid N (listwise)	4.25	0.73

The overall mean score for the attitudes toward the benefits of peer feedback was 4.25 (SD=0.73). The finding indicated that the majority of the respondents thought that the peer feedback activity improved their writing ability, with a mean score of 4.53 (SD=0.63). For the following item regarding their awareness of their grammatical mistakes, the mean score was 4.40 (SD=0.77). The last mean score was for the item, peer feedback encouraged me to write more, with a mean score of 4.00 (SD=0.87).

Table 4.7 Questionnaire results for the problem of peer feedback

Attitudes toward the problem of peer feedback	Mean	S.D.
11. I thought the idea of peer feedback was a waste of time.	2.17	0.95
12. My peer feedback experience was stressful.	2.40	1.16
13. Sometimes I did not like others' comments about my writing.	2.10	1.03
14. I thought that my writing was complete but my peers suggested some changes.	2.30	1.06
15. Some peers did not give comments for developing my writing in a better way.	2.77	1.10

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Table 4.7 (Continued)

Attitudes toward the problem of peer feedback	Mean	S.D.
16. I did not think that I was learning anything new in the peer feedback.	1.93	1.01
17. I felt that my feedback was not good.	2.53	1.14
18. I felt uncomfortable about giving feedback to my peers.	2.53	1.22
19. I was afraid that my comments might be incorrect.	3.47	1.14
20. I could not give feedback to my peer effectively.	2.97	0.93
Valid N (listwise)	2.52	1.07

The overall mean score for the attitudes toward the problem of peer feedback was 2.52 (SD=1.07). As can be seen, most of the students were afraid that their comments might be incorrect, with a mean score of 3.47 (SD=1.14). The mean score for the attitude that they could not give feedback to their peers effectively was 2.97 (SD=0.93). The response, that they did not think that they were learning anything new in the peer feedback, received the lowest mean score at 1.93 (SD=1.01).

Table 4.8 Questionnaire result toward peer feedback on Facebook

Attitudes toward peer feedback on Facebook	Mean	S.D.
21. I thought that peer feedback on Facebook was easy to use.	4.13	0.73
22. Peer feedback on Facebook was a good experience for me.	4.13	0.86
23. I would recommend this writing course with the use of Facebook to other students.	3.83	0.95
24. I thought that Facebook can help me improve my writing.	3.70	0.84
25. I will continue to use Facebook for developing my writing.	3.70	0.84
Valid N (listwise)	3.89	0.84

The result of the descriptive analysis showed that the overall mean score was 3.89 (SD=0.84). This result revealed that most students thought that peer feedback on Facebook was easy to use and was a good experience for them with a mean score of 4.13 (SD=0.73, 0.86) and followed by a mean score of 3.83 (SD=0.95) for “they would recommend this writing course with the use of Facebook to other students.” On the other hand, the lowest mean score was 3.70 (SD=0.84) for the idea that Facebook helped them to improve their writing and they would continue to use Facebook for developing their writing.

The results are consistent with the interviews showing that most of the students enjoyed doing the peer feedback on Facebook as it involved the use of technology, as was depicted in the following statement. “Peer feedback on Facebook was convenient. It was fun giving and receiving comments”. Besides, most of the interviewees realized the role that peer feedback on Facebook played in improving their English writing, it was a fun activity because it allowed them to work with their classmates outside the classroom.

5. Discussion

5.1 Why do the students in the peer feedback and self-correction group have different effects on the writing ability after completing the writing course?

The finding of this study showed that the peer feedback and self-correction tended to have

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significantly effect on writing ability. This may be due to the different characteristics of peer feedback and self-correction for revising writing tasks, these two groups are different from each other. For example, the students in the peer feedback group could edit their own tasks by following the guideline or comments of their friends. In contrast, the students in self-correction group had to revise their tasks by themselves without any comments from their peers. Further, the activities of the peer feedback group encouraged student-student interaction and participation in the classroom. Moreover, the students in the peer feedback group had two ways chance to review their own tasks and also their peers' tasks. These striking characteristics which the peer feedback method provides more learning participation and ultimately help the students improve their writing skills. This claim can be supported by the quantitative results of the present study, showing that the writing ability scores of the students in the peer feedback group were higher than those of the students in the self-correction group.

The findings are also supportive of Ertmer et al. (2009) theory that the students that were taught using the peer feedback method had the opportunity not only to reflect on the work of their peers, but also on their own work. The results also support the theory of Rollinson (2005), who claimed that peer feedback helps students to be more confident in writing by giving them practice in becoming critical readers. Additionally, peer feedback helps students become more self-reliant writers at the same time, writers that are both self-critical and that have the skills to self-edit and revise their writing.

5.2 The writing components that the students improved the most and least

The outcome from the writing ability test revealed that both groups of students – self-correction and peer feedback groups – had the same highest improvement of writing component in the organization part. This might be because all of the students learned how to organize the essays throughout the course. In addition, they were assigned writing assignments for practicing their organization skill. Meanwhile, the writing component that the students improved the most following the organization part was vocabulary for the self-correction group and the content part for the peer feedback group. Regarding the students of self-correction group, they had to revise their tasks by themselves, and words or sentences were what they always seem to focus on in their editing. Therefore, this is the reason why they had high skill in the use of vocabulary. On the other hand, the peer feedback group of students had to comment on their friends' paper and most of these students focused on the content of the writing, which encouraged them to develop this skill.

Moreover, the writing component that the students of both groups improved the least was the same – grammar. Thai students have faced this problem for a long time ago, and most of them had studied English grammar for more than ten years at secondary and university levels but they still have weak grammar skills. However, grammar was taught in this course but it was too difficult for the students to advance in their grammar skill.

5.3 Why are the learner's attitudes toward peer feedback more positive than the self-correction?

The results from the questionnaire showed that the students in the peer feedback group had more positive attitudes than the students in the self-correction group. This may be due to the fact that the peer feedback group of students revised their tasks by following the comments of their friends. On the other hand, the students in the self-correction group had to revise their tasks by themselves without any comments or guideline from their friends and that may have been too difficult for them. For example, the activities of the peer feedback group encouraged

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interaction and participation in the classroom. Furthermore, the students were offered the opportunity not only to reflect on the work of their peers, but also on their own work (Ertmer et al., 2009).

In terms of writing ability, most of the students agreed that the peer feedback activities improved their writing ability. This finding is supported by Grabe and Kaplan (1996) and Shokrpour, Keshavarz and Jafari (2013), who revealed that peer feedback can be used to reduce writing anxiety, increase the writer's confidence, engage the students in frequent reading and writing, and foster critical reading and reflection. Furthermore, these researchers believe that the peer feedback activity helps students manage their learning schedule, increases their motivation and joy in writing, and promotes their information literacy. Moreover, students also acknowledged that the peer feedback activity helped them to be aware of their grammatical mistakes, an idea that has been supported by Shokrpour et al. (2013). They claimed that students achieved autonomy in writing, wrote more frequently and accurately, and most importantly, felt empowered as writers from peer feedback activities.

Peer feedback training may be another reason why the students in the peer feedback group were more satisfied than the students in the self-correction group. Based on the literature, peer feedback methods are effective and useful when the primary training should be set up before starting the activity so that students can get a general picture of what they are going to do and how (Ho and Duong, 2014). As a result, in this study, the students in both the self-correction group and the peer feedback group were trained in how to generate effective feedback and suggestions on their peers' work at the beginning of the course. The researcher also highlighted the role of peer feedback in the writing process, and described and discussed the benefits of having peers review the students' papers as opposed to the teachers' response. Moreover, the students were supported to believe that they could trust their peer group assistance. Both groups of students were trained in the same method; however, only the experimental group of students did the peer feedback activities throughout the course. Therefore, it might be concluded that peer feedback training possibly increased the students' writing ability and helped them to be aware of their writing mistakes, which was acknowledged from their peers' comments. At the same time, the students had more self-confidence in their ability in terms of providing useful feedback to their friends and promoting positive attitudes toward the use of the peer feedback strategy in their writing process.

In conclusion, as the significantly different effects between peer feedback and self-correction on students' writing ability were shown in this study, it can confirm the idea of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, where skills are extended through the guidance and response of more competent learners as scaffolding may occur through feedback and lead to the students' writing improvement.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

1. This research was conducted in order to investigate the effects of self-correction and peer feedback, using Facebook, on the students' writing ability. Providing peer feedback through other social networking sites having different functions would be interesting to study.
2. Other critical factors that might have affected the results of the study, such as age, gender, learning styles, learning strategies, computer literacy, and group integrity, should be taken into consideration.
3. The results of this research were limited by the small sample size, and additionally the sample of this study was sophomore students studying in the field of engineering. Other fields of study and years of students are recommended for future research.

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