

Improving Thai High School Learners' Writing Ability: A Comparative Study of Anonymous and Non-Anonymous Peer Review

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Abstract—This research investigated the effects of anonymous and non-anonymous peer review on writing performance among Thai high school students, and their attitudes towards anonymity when providing and receiving feedback in a blended learning environment. One hundred and thirty Thai EFL learners in a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design were assigned to one of two groups, receiving either anonymous or non-anonymous peer review. The students wrote their opinion paragraphs and peer feedback in two closed FB groups created to support blended instruction. Data were obtained via a writing pretest and posttest, a questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data revealed a significant increase in all aspects of writing (content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics) for both groups after they performed peer review tasks. The difference between the two groups, however, was not statistically significant, suggesting that both types of feedback contributed to improving writing. Attitudinal findings indicated that, in general, students felt positively toward the utility and engagement inherent to peer reviewing, as reflected in perception-based factor items on motivation and attitudinal measures. The non-anonymised group yielded significantly higher scores in trustworthiness, responsibility for learning, and confidence. Qualitative findings also indicated that anonymous feedback encouraged objectivity and critical introspection, whereas non-anonymous feedback generated social bonding and emotional investment. Overall, empirical confirmation of this essential pedagogical implication of peer review not only sheds light on how linguistic ability, learner autonomy, and motivation can be enhanced in blended EFL writing courses but also supports the predominant use of the non-anonymous peer-review format.

Index Terms—writing ability, peer review, anonymous feedback, blended learning, Thai high school EFL students

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing has been claimed to be one of the most difficult skills among EFL students, especially in Thailand. It is evident that Thai students still have problems in reading and writing across various educational levels, both secondary and tertiary (Rachawong & Phusawisot, 2025). A significant challenge stems from negative transfer from L1, with students transferring Thai syntactic patterns into English writing (Bennui, 2008). This leads to systematic errors such as subject omission, adjectives used as verbs, serial verb constructions, misplaced modifiers, compound nouns in the wrong order, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and literal word-for-word translations. At a discourse level, higher proficiency learners will produce essays with little organisation or central focus, and will paraphrase rather than develop (Sattayatham & Ratanapinyowong, 2008). The gravity of these problems notwithstanding, writing instruction in Thai EFL settings is not yet fully developed. One structural factor is that writing quality is not included in the national high school test, which means that, for many schools, reading and vocabulary have become more important, as they expect their students to write once they learn to read. However, writing is a productive skill that needs to be taught explicitly, with scaffolding and in context.

A great deal of effort has therefore been invested in the quest to find successful and realistic writing pedagogies (Badger & White, 2000; Steele, 2015; Tribble, 2009). Among the various possibilities, feedback has gained considerable attention as a potent pedagogical method. Feedback informs performance, makes revisions, rewards successful writing behaviours, and helps writers construct internalised criteria for quality. Recent research has broadened the concept of feedback from mere error correction to engagement, feedback literacy, modality, and metacognitive regulation. Zhang et al. (2023), in a longitudinal mixed-methods study, found that high-level (and active) engagement (giving peer feedback rather than being

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passive) positively affected the course of EFL learners' self-efficacy and writing quality throughout various writing cycles. In the Thai context, Prompan and Piamsai (2024) found that the combined use of peer feedback and self-regulated learning strategies increased writing proficiency and self-regulation among university students in a 12-week online course. Moreover, based on the work of Waluyo and Panmei (2024), using social media platforms to provide or share peer feedback can offer potential benefits, increasing students' motivation and involvement in writing projects. Studies have also demonstrated that feedback is conducive to motivation and confidence (Jiang & Sukying, 2024), and they have added that learners appreciate feedback across learning contexts (Park, 2018). Digital peer review, social-networking feedback, and collaborative writing have been shown to increase accuracy, attitude, and participation (Bailey & Judd, 2018; Barrot, 2021; Ciftci & Kocoglu, 2012; Rodliyah, 2016).

At the policy level, the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2560 (Ministry of Education, 2017) stipulates that grade 12 students be able to express their feelings and opinions in writing, using reasoning statements. Regardless, the majority of writing feedback research in Thailand has been conducted with university students, while research in high school contexts has not been as widely investigated (Tan & Manochphinyo, 2017). Cultural dimensions also influence the effectiveness of peer review: Thai students avoid publicly criticising their peers out of a desire for social harmony and face-saving (Hyland, 2000). Peer interaction in the classroom is naturally restricted by time limitations as well (Ho & Savignon, 2007). Competition and the facilitation of social relations may be counteracted in a blended learning environment that reduces interaction and offers greater flexibility in participation.

Given these deficiencies, this study has urgent significance for investigating Thai EFL high school students' anonymous and non-anonymous feedback, as well as their ways of receiving English-language feedback. Two research questions thus inform the present study:

1. Are there any significant differences in Thai high school students' writing ability after receiving feedback from anonymous and non-anonymous peer reviewers in a blended learning environment?
2. What are Thai high school students' attitudes toward anonymous and non-anonymous peer review in writing?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. L2 Writing

Writing is a cognitively and linguistically complex activity, requiring idea generation, organisation, lexical encoding, grammatical encoding, and revision (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Because of its recursiveness and sociocognitive nature, writing tends to be recognised as the most challenging of the four language skills for L2 writers (Hyland, 2019; Manchón, 2020). In a Thai setting, where students in general may have only classroom-based exposure to English, as discussed above, EFL writers at all levels of education face ongoing writing difficulties (Rachawong & Phusawisot, 2025). L1 interference also plays a significant role. Thai students tend to apply their language's syntax, sentence structure, and grammatical constructions into English, leading them to make errors in verb tense, articles, prepositions, word form, draft, and word order (Bennui, 2008; Matwangsang et al., 2025). University research also points to struggles with idea generation, organisation, and task identification, as well as ongoing mechanical errors (Rachawong & Phusawisot, 2025).

In addition to linguistic considerations, pedagogical and sociocultural factors influence writing development. Teaching to the exam and minimal feedback, alongside inadequate process-oriented teaching, are barriers (Waluyo & Panmei, 2024), and cultural norms of deference may constrain peer feedback and collaboration (Hyland, 2000). While research on the teaching of EFL writing in the Thai context is increasing, most studies have been conducted at the university level, with secondary education contexts relatively understudied. Because writing is so crucial for both academic and post-secondary success, there is a gap in the literature regarding research-based instructional practices that might benefit high school students. This gap is addressed through an investigation of writing development mediated by feedback in blended high school English classes.

B. Writing Instruction Approaches

As one of the most challenging skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, writing is generally recognised. It has linguistic accuracy and a conceptual foundation, but it is also about making sense of an exchange for particular communicative purposes. Thus, the choice of appropriate teaching strategies is crucial for learners to develop strong writing competencies. Four major theoretical bases of writing instruction: (1) product, (2) process, (3) genre, (4) process-genre models are reviewed in this section, along with peer review and blended learning as pedagogies supporting the practices.

(a). Product Approach

The product approach views writing as the result of a student's linguistic competence, focusing on accuracy, grammatical control, and the use of cohesive devices. Writing supported by this model often consists of four steps: (1) readership of mentor texts, (2) parsing the linguistic registers present, (3) attention to idea organisation with support and feedback as needed, and (4) composing a wholly own text (Steele, 2015).

It is argued that a focus on linguistic form enables learners to internalise grammatical and lexical patterns, leading to fewer writing errors over time (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This is consistent with behaviourist theory, which values learning through imitation and repetition. However, critics highlight several limitations. The focus on accuracy and

imitation may stifle learners' creativity and communicative intent. What is more, the product approach seems to underestimate the recursive and process-oriented dimension of writing, leaving little space for planning, revising, and the effectiveness of a writer's voice (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2019).

(b). Process Approach

The process model also diverts our attention from texts to the composing processes that produce them. Writing is regarded as a cycle of four processing stages: pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing (Seow, 2002). Teachers serve as facilitators, helping students learn to ideate, negotiate, and give feedback to one another. This can lead to reflection and revision (Brown & Lee, 2015; Hyland, 2019). The goal of this method is to help students see writing as a process rather than a product. Feedback and iteration are key, fostering metacognitive awareness and self-regulation (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Repeated rehearsal of these stages encourages learners to build confidence and develop fluent writing (Badger & White, 2000).

Still, the process approach has not been free from criticism. Such a model is criticised for sometimes treating a single process of composing or writing (e.g., planning) as if it were universally relevant across genres, while ignoring context-dependent variation in purpose (Badger & White, 2000; Manchón, 2020). Besides, some students may not receive sufficient linguistic input to produce language accurately, particularly in EFL environments and with limited exposure to authentic language.

(c). Genre Approach

The genre perspective (see Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)/English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and New Rhetoric traditions) is based on the notion that writing is situated, social and driven by communicative purpose and audience (Flowerdew, 1993; Hyland, 2004). This, therefore, means that writing instruction includes the analysis of model texts to ascertain the structure and language of a genre, guided processes, and independent basic writing.

Three primary traditions inform the pedagogy of genre. The new rhetoric looks at social context and the norms of discourse communities. The ESP highlights different genres as potential tools for fulfilling academic or professional communication demands. Lastly, SFL is based on the interaction among language, meaning, and context (Piriyasilpa, 2016).

In the EFL context, such as Thailand, SFL works well because it scaffolds learners' understanding of 'what language does in social life' (Piriyasilpa, 2016). Genre instruction can help writers see writing as purposive communication processes (Hyland, 2019) and be more attentive to recognising and producing different kinds of text. Yet, critics suggest that topical learning may foster excessive reliance on models and limit learners' creativity (Badger & White, 2000). If used in a constraining way, learners can be turned into followers rather than creators.

(d). Process-Genre Approach

To overcome the limitations of both models, Badger and White (2000) proposed a process-genre approach that integrates the advantages of product, process, and genre models. Such a hybrid model acknowledges that writing results from knowledge of language (product), understanding of the situation and communicative purposes (genre), and the effective deployment of writing processes (process). Learners model, draft, receive feedback, and revise in cycles while taking the audience and purpose into account. The process-genre method enhances accuracy and fluency by combining a commitment to explicit language instruction with recursive writing practice (Hyland, 2019). It is also inclusive enough for learners of varying proficiency levels to engage in analytics, guided by outside teacher or peer collaboration.

The process-genre approach is utilised in the current study to develop the writing skills of Thai EFL students. They begin by reading sample opinion paragraphs to become familiar with the genre. Next, focus on process-based activities, including brainstorming, drafting, revising, and peer review. Peer review is proposed as a scaffold for accuracy and metacognitive awareness, in line with the integrated process-genre perspective.

C. Peer Review

Peer review, also known as peer feedback, peer response, or peer assessment, is the process in which students give and receive evaluative feedback on writing produced by their peers (Barrot, 2021; Zhu, 2001; Zhang et al., 2023). Studies have shown that peer feedback can improve linguistic accuracy, writing quality, and self-regulated learning (Ellis, 2009; Jiang & Sukying, 2024). Providing feedback also encourages more thorough language processing and critical thinking (Zhang et al., 2023).

Feedback could also be positive or corrective. Although potentially face-threatening, corrective feedback is central to noticing and recasting language forms (Tatawy, 2002). Positive or negative feedback is primarily based on how well it supports learners' goals and self-efficacy (Hyland, 2019). Recent studies (Prompan & Piamsai, 2024) found that incorporating peer feedback in digital or blended environments enhanced engagement, as well as self-efficacy and autonomy, among EFL writers.

D. Blended Learning

Language learning has evolved rapidly with technological advances, enabling learners to learn flexibly beyond the classroom. Blended learning, an instructional approach that combines online and face-to-face instruction, has become

increasingly popular in general education and language teaching (Bonk & Graham, 2006; Mahmud, 2018; Sharma & Barret, 2008). It promotes flexibility, convenience, and self-paced learning (Obiedat et al., 2014).

In the school context, blended learning is a planned mixture of face-to-face teaching and computer-mediated activities (Barrot, 2021; Obiedat et al., 2014). These models range from rotation, flex, self-blend, to enriched-virtual designs. In EFL settings, blended learning enables multimodal feedback, peer cooperation, and reflective practice (Barrot, 2021; Waluyo & Panmei, 2024). Combined, infusing blended learning into peer review and process-genre writing pedagogy enables teachers to construct interactive environments in which writers write iteratively, receive multimodal feedback, and develop linguistic accuracy and communicative competence.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

A. *Participants and Context*

This study included 130 Thai EFL students from a public school in northeastern Thailand. They were all from grade 11 classes and were enrolled in the English Writing Subject as an elective course of the school curriculum. The students were divided into two treatment groups: The anonymous group and the non-anonymous group.

To ensure that the participants in both groups were homogeneous, an English proficiency test was used to assess their overall English competency. The Cambridge English Assessment, based on the CEFR rating, was used to develop the English proficiency exam. The test consisted of 25 question items, each with four choices. Before the intervention, the English proficiency exam was administered in the first period of the course on the same day to all three classes. The results showed that the anonymous group achieved a mean of 15 out of 25 (64.88%, SD=1.41), while the non-anonymous group had a mean of 16.19 (64.76%, SD=1.45). The independent-samples *t*-test revealed no significant difference in English proficiency between the groups ($t=0.12$). These scores also indicate that the average English proficiency of participants in both groups is comparable to CEFR levels A2 Key for Schools and B1 Preliminary for Schools (B1). The grade point average (GPA) from six English courses students took in the previous three semesters was also retrieved from the e-school system to corroborate their English proficiency test scores. Participants in the anonymous group had a grade point average (GPA) of 3.92 (SD=0.15), and participants in the non-anonymous group had a GPA of 3.91 (SD=0.16). This result indicates that the two treatment groups have similar levels of English proficiency.

B. *Research Instruments*

(a). *Writing Tasks*

There were five writing tasks in this research. The writing topics were selected based on the requirements of the Basic Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (Ministry of Education of Thailand, 2008), stipulating that Grade 12 students should be able to "...write to describe their own feelings and express opinions about various matters, activities, experiences and news/incidents with proper reasoning" (p. 264). The writing topics included Task 1 (favourite television show), Task 2 (favourite sport), Task 3 (favourite hero), Task 4 (dream job) and Task 5 (favourite movie). To counter bias, the pretest (Task 1) and posttest (Task 5) were conducted in highly similar environments. For example, the writing topics were identical (e.g., favourite television shows and favourite movies). Each test lasted 50 minutes, and participants were asked to write on paper. For Tasks 2-4, students were asked to write the assigned paragraph in their assigned Facebook Groups.

(b). *Questionnaire*

The five-point Likert scale questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part collected demographic information from participants, including age, gender, and prior English experience. The second part investigated the participants' attitudes toward anonymous and non-anonymous peer review. The questionnaire comprised five levels of agreement: (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) neutral; (4) agree; and (5) strongly agree. After the posttest, the questionnaire was delivered to the students and administered in a face-to-face class session. Each participant served as both a peer reviewer and a feedback recipient to complete the questionnaire.

Five experts validated the questionnaire. The Item-Objective Congruence Index (IOC) was used to summarise the experts' decisions. The analysis revealed that the IOC was 0.50 or higher for 34 of 35 items. The items that failed were revised in accordance with the experts' suggestions.

(c). *Semi-Structured Interview*

The interview protocol was designed to elicit students' attitudes toward anonymous and non-anonymous peer review. Twelve participants were selected for the stimulus recall and the semi-structured interview. The twelve participants were purposively selected based on their posttest scores: two with high scores, two with average scores, and two with low scores from each treatment group. The same experts evaluated the semi-structured interview questions as they did the questionnaire. The reliability of the questions was calculated using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha for the interview questions was 0.938.

C. *Data Collection*

A consent form was given to each participant before their participation. Pre-instruction, participants completed Writing Task 1 and the In-class Pretest, both administered in paper mode. Next, participants were instructed in writing opinion

paragraphs using a process-genre approach. Instruction featured model texts and explicit instruction on how to organise a paragraph, use a topic sentence, employ logical reasoning, use connectors, and write a conclusion. Students were encouraged to know that opinion writing demands support for points of view, not just fixed “correct” responses.

The scoring rubric was presented at the onset of Writing Task 2 as a reference for writing and peer review. Students were trained to provide feedback on five rubric-related criteria: content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Writing tasks 2-4 were peer-reviewed in a blended setting via closed Facebook groups. There were two subgroups for each class, namely anonymous and non-anonymous. Those in the anonymous condition received 10 shared pseudonym accounts, and those in the non-anonymous condition logged on with individual accounts and received a list of teacher-assigned partners. Students were given three days to write for each task, two days to provide feedback, and two additional days to revise. Task 5, written in class and not peer-reviewed, was administered as the posttest and examined against Task 1 to determine improvement. Two raters, a Thai English teacher and a native-English teacher with more than 10 years’ experience, scored all tasks using Hyland’s (2019) rubric.

D. Data Analysis

The anonymous and non-anonymous groups’ writing pretest and posttest mean scores were compared using a *t*-test to assess the students’ development in writing ability. The numerical data gathered from the questionnaire were also examined to investigate how students responded to different forms of peer review, namely, anonymous and non-anonymous peer review. Descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, and *t*-test, were used to analyse this data. The quantitative results from the questionnaire were triangulated using the qualitative data from the interview. Deductive thematic analysis was conducted to identify themes for presenting the findings. Two experienced coders individually coded and cross-checked the findings for trustworthiness and credibility.

IV. RESULTS

A. The Effects of Anonymous and Non-Anonymous Peer Review on Writing Ability

Table 1 presents a summary of the results from both groups of high school students’ writing abilities. The anonymous group scored an average of 16.05 (SD = 1.41) on the pretest and 21.66 (SD = 1.30) on the posttest out of 25. This difference was statistically significant ($t = 2.737, p < 0.001$). Similarly, the non-anonymous group had an average score of 16.20 (SD = 1.43) for the pretest and 21.66 (SD = 1.30) for the posttest, and this difference was also statistically significant ($t = 2.379, p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that both treatments significantly enhance learners’ writing ability.

TABLE 1
A SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL PARTICIPANTS’ WRITING ABILITY

Groups	Test	Mean	SD	Percentage	Mean Dif.	<i>t</i> -value	Effect size
Anonymous	Pretest	16.05	1.41	64.20	22.44	2.737*	4.15
	Posttest	21.66	1.30	86.64			
Non-anonymous	Pretest	16.20	1.43	64.80	22.64	2.379*	4.13
	Posttest	21.86	1.31	87.44			

*Note: $p < 0.001$ for *t*-value

As shown in Table 2, the results also revealed no difference between the anonymous and non-anonymous peer review groups. Specifically, groups did not differ on their pretest scores ($t = 0.611, p = 0.543$) or on their posttest scores ($t = 0.815, p = 0.815$).

TABLE 2
A COMPARISON OF WRITING ABILITY BETWEEN THE ANONYMOUS AND NON-ANONYMOUS GROUPS

Test	Anonymous			Non-anonymous			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	%	SD	Mean	%	SD		
Pretest	16.05	64.20	1.41	16.19	64.78	1.43	.611	.543
Posttest	21.66	86.64	1.30	21.86	87.45	1.31	.815	.418

B. Results From the Post-Intervention Questionnaire

Table 3 presents the mean and standard deviation of students’ overall attitudes toward anonymous and non-anonymous peer review. Results showed that the mean scores of participants’ overall attitudes in the anonymous and non-anonymous groups were 3.91 (78.23%, SD = 0.96) and 3.98 (79.69%, SD = 0.88), respectively. Thus, the findings suggest that the participants in both groups reported positive attitudes toward peer review. However, overall, attitudes were significantly more positive in the non-anonymous group compared to the anonymous peer review group.

TABLE 3
OVERALL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD ANONYMOUS AND NON-ANONYMOUS PEER REVIEW

Writing components	Attitude	Anonymous			Non-anonymous		
		Mean	%	SD	Mean	%	SD
Content	Peer reviewer	3.86	77.19	0.96	3.89	77.81	0.88
	Feedback receiver	3.96	79.26	0.90	4.13	82.50	0.79
Organisation	Peer reviewer	3.73	74.69	0.95	3.77	75.31	0.89
	Feedback receiver	3.99	79.79	0.93	4.14	82.81	0.82
Grammar	Peer reviewer	3.80	76.09	0.96	3.96	79.22	0.92
	Feedback receiver	3.95	78.96	0.98	4.17	83.33	0.82
Vocabulary	Peer reviewer	3.82	76.33	1.01	3.74	74.84	0.94
	Feedback receiver	4.04	80.73	0.92	4.12	82.40	0.89
Mechanics	Peer reviewer	3.96	79.22	1.02	3.97	79.30	0.98
	Feedback receiver	4.11	82.29	0.92	4.16	83.23	0.86
	Overall attitude	3.91	78.23	0.96	3.98	79.69	0.88

C. Qualitative Results

To students' attitudes toward peer review of writing, both anonymously and non-anonymously, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with 12 students (6 from each group). The interviews were all in Thai, digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English by the investigators. A deductive thematic analysis was undertaken based on the first five analytic categories of the L2 writing rubric: content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Those in the anonymous group are assigned to A1-A6, and those in the non-anonymous group to N1-N6.

Analysis of qualitative findings indicated that all of the survey participants reported positive attitudes toward peers' reviews as supportive. The findings also showed that both gained more confidence and made fewer mistakes through each other's feedback. But they observed unique characteristics of both. Anonymous conditions facilitated objectivity and honest critique; non-anonymous conditions encouraged comfort, collaboration, and emotional support.

(a). Content: Developing Logical and Coherent Ideas

The qualitative interviews indicated that students in both the anonymous and non-anonymous groups were strongly positive about peer review as a tool for developing ideas and improving the logical coherence of their writing. Peer feedback was an occasion to consider the quality, coherence, and relevance of the content. Respondents in the anonymous group reported that receiving feedback highlighted suboptimal aspects of their papers and prompted them to make substantive changes. Participants in the non-anonymous condition, however, emphasised the motivating element of being encouraged and supported by known peers. The following excerpts reveal these developments:

A1: "I think I know how to write good content after reading the examples from other students' work."

A2: "I was fortunate to have been guided well on content by my peer reviewer. Now, I feel my writing has logic, that it's not written like before."

A4: "The encouragement I received about my content gave me confidence in the fact that I could write."

A5: "The way I put my content together was nonsensical at first, but it got better from peer review in my first assignment."

N1: "I don't have any problems with content after the first assignment. It is very easy. My interesting content was praised."

N4: "One thing I learned about making more interesting content came from a friend."

N5: "My reviewer presented a sensible suggestion for amending my writing."

N6: "My friend said that she liked my interesting story."

(b). Organisation: Structuring and Sequencing Ideas

The qualitative data indicated that peer review was highly effective in focusing students' attention on paragraph structure, coherence, and overall text organisation. Both groups also reported that engaging in peer review and being reviewed by peers made them more attentive to how ideas were organised in their writing. Most anonymous comments focused on text coherence and structural clarity, as reviewers aimed to offer constructive advice on ways to enhance organisation without personal preconceptions. By contrast, non-anonymous feedback seemed to feature cooperative dialogue, with peers engaging in mutual help from both perspectives, thereby co-constructing better-organised texts. The excerpts below indicate these patterns:

A2: "A friend told me I was a good writer. It made me more confident."

A3: "Either my peer thought that I was good at writing and did not make any comments on the organisation or whatever."

A4: "My writing was well-organised by my peer review."

A6: "My friend said that my elements of writing were good. It made me happy."

N2: "The reviewer helped me improve punctuation, such as a comma. In some cases, I forget to put a comma after connectives. I am more circumspect now."

N5: "My classmate helped me organise my thoughts more logically."

N6: "My organisation wasn't good, but peer review made me rethink it."

(c). *Grammar: Accuracy and Awareness*

Analyses of the interview data further indicated that grammar was a primary focus in both groups' oral discussions. Many participants appreciated the role of peer review in enabling them to identify and correct grammatical errors, improve language precision, and develop high-quality writing. It should be noted that the feedback differed in character between the two conditions. Students in the unknown group said they received more specific and direct grammatical corrections, which motivated them to transform independently and engage in critical self-evaluation of their language. In comparison, feedback was generally seen as sympathetic and comforting among the non-anonymous students, but at times less necessary, because peers did not want to give strong negative comments to stay on good terms. These discoveries suggest that anonymous peer review can improve grammar by providing objective, constructive feedback. In contrast, non-anonymous peer review can improve grammatical awareness through trustful collaboration and emotional support. The following excerpts sustain these findings:

A1: "I modified almost all according to the comments."

A2: "I have trouble writing and using grammar. I was fortunate to have a reviewer who was good with grammar. He highlighted some of my flaws and directed me on how to fix them, hands-off. After a few assignments, I stopped making the same mistakes. And on top of this, because my grammar was better, I got a higher writing score."

A3: "My grammar is poor. The feedback was mostly about my grammar. This draft is much better than that first one."

A6: "Firstly, my grammar was not good. But once my peer taught me, it improved so much."

N2: "Good eyes for grammar (e.g., subject-verb agreement, verb tenses) from my reviewers."

N3: "The grammar my reviewer didn't say anything about. Perhaps she does not want to hurt my feelings because she is my friend."

N5: "My work was well enhanced with the help of my friend's advice on grammar."

(d). *Vocabulary: Word Selection and Vocabulary Development*

The examination of the qualitative data showed that participants in both groups perceived that their vocabulary learning and word use had improved after the peer review tasks. Participants said that the process of reviewing and receiving peer feedback helped them learn new words, find the right words for their essays, and expand their vocabulary. Two distinct patterns were evident in the two groups. Students in the anonymous group reported that their reviewers' feedback made them more lexically accurate and appropriate, as reviewers provided objective, detailed comments on word choice and use. In contrast, the non-anonymous group students mentioned that peers could aid them in shared vocabulary learning through social collaboration and exposure to peers' writing styles and expressions. The following excerpts reflect this pattern:

A1: "My classmate helped teach me how to use vocab effectively."

A4: "My reviewer said a few of my word choices were odd. So, I checked and found out that synonyms are not necessarily substitutable."

A6: "I would copy down the words that I liked from my peer's work while reading it."

N2: "My friend's recommendation teaches me more words."

N5: "Assisting my friends makes...[um]...learn a lot of new vocabulary."

N6: "After my friend showed me, my writing was way better."

(e). *Mechanics: Spelling, Capitalisation, and Punctuation*

Students from both groups reported improvements in their mechanical accuracy, especially in spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation. Participants repeatedly reported that their peer review had helped them identify and correct surface problems in their writing that they hadn't noticed. The feedback in both conditions was different. The students in the anonymous group repeatedly referred to their reviewers as "proofreaders," determining right from wrong answers and pointing out typographical or mechanical errors. By contrast, students in the non-anonymous condition indicated that their reviewers not only corrected but also explained and engaged in dialogue, which helped them learn the rules of writing mechanics. The following excerpts support such claims:

A1: "Capitalisation and punctuation, as my reviewer pointed out to me. After that, I did not repeat those same errors."

A3: "My spelling was terrible...my reviewer helped proofread it."

A6: "It's like having a proofreader."

N2: "Reviewer corrected punctuations like commas (,) for me."

N3: "Initially, I could not perceive the rule of capitalisation, but my friend made me realise it."

N5: "I'm glad that my reviewer has good eyes for spelling errors."

V. DISCUSSION

A. *The Effects of Anonymous and Non-Anonymous Peer Review on Writing Ability in a Blended Learning Environment*

Both anonymous and non-anonymous peer review effectively improved students' writing performance in a blended

classroom, according to this study's results. Both treatment groups obtained posttest scores that were significantly higher than their pretest scores on the opinion writing task, indicating significant improvement in their writing skills. More importantly, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups, suggesting that both types of feedback could improve writing proficiency with a proportional effect. These results are consistent with many other studies that argue that peer review, regardless of anonymity, can be an effective pedagogical tool for improving writing performance among EFL learners (Ciftci & Kocoglu, 2012; Maarof et al., 2011; Plutsky & Wilson, 2004).

The increase in writing performance observed in the current study can be explained within the framework of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, specifically within the ZPD. Peer review enables students to scaffold performance through social interaction, including negotiation and collaborative feedback exchange (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). This interaction was made possible in the present study through a closed Facebook group that provided a space for students to communicate asynchronously, give each other feedback, and collectively redraft their work. This type of interaction supported some learners in co-constructing meaning, reflecting on their writing, and revising texts with peers' feedback. This is consistent with Hu (2005) and Min (2005), who both stress that writing development is a social process in which learners improve at one level by giving and receiving feedback. This finding also supports the idea that blended peer feedback could improve engagement, writing quality, and cognitive interaction among EFL learners (Wang & Kew, 2025).

The study's qualitative results provide additional evidence for these theoretical explanations. Students said that peer feedback enabled them to make substantive changes at macro- and micro-cohesion levels. They showed an increase in content and organisation, as well as in grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Participants reported that peer review prompted them to pay closer attention to coherence, logical structure, and word choice. These findings align with those of Diab (2010), who reported that peer feedback promotes higher-order revision. The current findings have also demonstrated that peer feedback in blended environments fosters sustained participation and encourages learners to enact meaningful change, suggesting that socialised writing is a reflective and dynamic experience.

In addition to advances in writing, this study's results have also shed light on peer review as a means of fostering self-awareness, becoming autonomous learners, and thinking critically. For many students, analysing and responding to peer feedback helped them identify their own linguistic problems and prompted greater self-monitoring during revision. This result provides evidence for Jiang and Sukying's (2024) assertion that feedback establishes independence, and for Hyland's (2000) claim that it fosters more active learning by reducing reliance on the teacher.

The blended learning approach used in the present study has also proved to be beneficial in promoting students' writing development. Blended learning is the use of both face-to-face and online instruction, in which students control the time, place, path, and pace of their interaction with content, peers, and instructors (Obiedat et al., 2014). Facebook enabled students to see their peers' drafts, provide and receive feedback, and make revisions at any time, from anywhere. This level of access was probably a motivator to listen and participate. By the same token, Tananuraksakul (2014) in Thailand also found similar results, as later supported by newer studies that blended peer feedback selections and demonstrated increased user participation, writing quality, and satisfaction based on learner input (Wang & Kew, 2025). The integration of digital tools and peer sharing created an interactive, supportive context that prompted greater reflection and more sustained writing.

B. Students' Attitudes Toward Anonymous and Non-Anonymous Peer Review on Writing Ability

The results of this study showed that participants in both groups had positive attitudes toward peer review and described it as an interactive learning experience, albeit demanding. These results agree with previous and recent studies demonstrating that peer feedback (in socially connected or partially blended contexts) promotes student motivation, confidence, and commitment (Barrot, 2021; Choi, 2013; Wang & Kew, 2025). Similarly, Saito and Fujita (2004) suggested that students are more likely to offer supportive feedback and higher-order features of writing (content and organisation) when they know their feedback partners, as this promotes an affective, safe learning environment.

Qualitative data from this study support these findings. Non-anonymous group students repeatedly reported that they were not anxious around strangers and that being friends with or knowing someone else led to feedback being given and received in a supportive manner. One participant remarked, for example, "My classmate helped me organise my thoughts more logically" (N5), and another stated, "My organisation wasn't good, but peer review made me rethink it" (N6). By sharing their identities, students create an environment of trust and mutual respect, which should make it easier for them to offer and receive constructive feedback on one another's drafts. These excerpts exemplify how two parties who know each other are more likely to trust one another than anonymous writers, and they can engage in a dialogue based on positive face, as noted above. N3 stated, "My reviewer did not say anything about grammar; perhaps she does not want to hurt my feelings." This conforms with Wu and Schunn's (2021) conclusion that relational closeness may lead to more supportive, yet less critical, peer feedback. However, such affective comfort managed their motivation and alleviated the fear of negative evaluation, which proved to be a strong aspect in EFL contexts when writing anxiety is prevalent.

The anonymous group, however, stated that their experiences had helped promote objectivity, honesty, and self-reflection. For instance, A2 said, "I was fortunate to have been guided well on content by my peer reviewer." Meanwhile, A4 said, "The encouragement I received about my content gave me confidence in the fact that I could write." Presumably, anonymity curbs social pressure, enabling reviewers to give frank and constructive feedback without concern that it will negatively impact relationships. Therefore, non-anonymous review supports emotional security, while anonymous review

encourages cognitive depth and critical thinking, illustrating the distinct merits of both modes. Peer review was found to promote a safe emotional environment, objectivity, motivation, confidence, and engagement in learning. By evaluating others' work, students in both groups stated that it provoked them to consider their own strengths and weaknesses. For example, A6 reported that her grammar improved after her peer taught her. This aligns with claims that feedback fosters learner autonomy and self-regulated learning by moving away from teacher-centred correction toward learner-motivated improvement (Hyland, 2000; Jiang & Sukying, 2024). N6 also said, "After my friend showed me, my writing was way better." This positive affective response reflects how experienced peer support can build confidence, maintain effort, and decrease apprehension about writing.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings for RQ1 reveal that peer review, whether anonymous or non-anonymous, enhanced students' writing in terms of content, organisation, language use, and mechanics. No differences were found between the two modes of feedback; therefore, it could be assumed that they are equally helpful at this stage of writing development. These results suggest that the value of peer review lies not in its anonymity but in the opportunities for reflection, revision, and reciprocal learning. Therefore, multiple cycles of peer review in a mixed mode seem to be an effective pedagogical technique for improving the linguistic and cognitive dimensions of EFL writing.

Regarding RQ2, in both groups, students showed favourable attitudes towards peer review as helpful, motivating, and a means to improve their writing. But non-anonymous participants experienced significantly higher levels of affective engagement, trust, and collaborative comfort. These patterns are further evident in the qualitative analysis: feedback with facial expressions and names encouraged empathy and support, while anonymous judgements fostered objectification and criticism. Overall, the results indicate that each approach offers unique advantages: anonymity for reflection or judgment, and non-anonymity for connectedness, self-confidence, and emotional engagement.

The pedagogical implications are clear. Firstly, both forms of peer review can and should be incorporated into EFL writing instruction to facilitate language development, learner awareness, and revision skills. Second, as non-anonymous reviews promote trust and motivation, teachers may privilege public peer interactions. However, an anonymous review could be applied to elicit more objective feedback, particularly from advanced participants. A hybrid model of the two could, as such, hold the emotional cushion and depth together. Third, dedicated training is necessary: students, and particularly low-proficiency students, need scaffolding, suggested comments, and guided checklists to provide thoughtful, high-quality feedback. The use of digital resources, such as closed online groups or learning management systems, can also facilitate flexible participation and continued engagement.

However, the study has several limitations. It only trained on opinion paragraph writing, rendering generalisation to other genres, such as argumentative or narrative texts, unfeasible. Yet more research is needed to compare peer review across a variety of writing tasks. Moreover, despite guidance for students to address each of the five writing aspects in their feedback, many focused only on grammar and vocabulary; further research is needed to foster well-rounded, thorough feedback. The study was further limited to an online peer-review environment. It would be interesting to compare with a face-to-face environment and with different digital platforms, such as AI-based tools. Lastly, future studies could recruit diverse groups of learners at various proficiency levels, ages, and cultural contexts in their design, to better capture long-term effects on writing development as well as learners' autonomy and confidence.

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