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Online Collaboration via Wikis in Promoting Peer Feedback among EFL Students

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Abstract
Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) tools such as wikis are being used more frequently in language learning situations. Their accessibility and usability have made them a popular choice amongst language teachers; especially in the teaching of writing. This study was conducted to examine students' perceptions towards providing peer feedback via a wiki-platform. The participants of this study were non-local students who had travelled to Malaysia and had all enrolled in a language centre to learn English in order to further their studies. This study randomly selected 18 of these students; eight male and ten female students; their ages ranging from 18-29. 14 students were asked to write an essay, upload it onto a wiki-platform, and comment on the essays of their peers through the platform. This process was carried out for a total of nine times. At the end of the study, a questionnaire was distributed to inquire about the students' perceptions of using wikis to collaboratively correct essays with the help of their peers. The findings suggest that the participants had a positive perception on the idea of collaborating through the platform. Hence, a wiki-platform could be used as a medium to encourage interaction and cooperation in learning writing outside the physical and time limitations of a traditional classroom. Teachers will also be able to benefit from the extended time to help students in their essay writing.

Keywords: wikis, wiki-classroom, peer feedback, written accuracy, student perception, motivation

1. Introduction

Providing feedback to students' essays is a very time-consuming and difficult task for teachers, but students expect it nonetheless. A solution is to ask students in the same class to correct their peer's essays. This type of feedback, peer feedback, however, has its own difficulties. It has been a debatable topic amongst students, as many do not see themselves knowledgeable enough to correct their classmate's mistakes. This perception is also shared with some teachers believing that students are not capable enough to correct their peers' essay. However, there are educators who believe students can be taught to provide feedback to their peers and this method yields greater results if the knowledge of a number of students is put together collaboratively.

The development of a variety of easy-to-use Internet publishing tools is recently evident (Richardson, 2006) [30]. These tools are changing the way people, including students at all levels, interact with the world (Solomon & Schrum, 2007; Pramela Krish, Marlyna Maros & Siti Hamin Stapa, 2012) [32, 29].

Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) tools are examples of these tools being used more frequently in language learning situations these days. And an example of such tools is wikis. Its usability and their ability to be accessed at any time or place has made it a popular teaching tool amongst language teachers; especially in the teaching of writing. There are many studies (Alshumaimeri, 2010; Judd, Kennedy, & Cropper, 2010; Mak and Coniam, 2008; Chang, 2010; Pope, 2010) [1, 16, 21, 3]. which have looked at the effects wikis has on collaborative learning and how they help students put their thoughts together to form a common goal. However, few studies have been conducted regarding the provision of peer corrective feedback via wikis.

Although much research has been conducted on collaboration in writing, studies which focus on the revision process of writing through wikis and collaboration is limited (Ducate *et al*, 2011; Storch 2011) [9, 34]. These studies have shown both advantages and disadvantages to writing collaboratively. Fung (2010) [11]. stated that in collaborative writing classrooms and tasks, student's knowledge, experience and writing outcomes improved gradually over time. Hodges (2002) [13]. claimed that collaborative writing improved the students' linguistic accuracy over time. In addition, Barkley *et al*. (2005) [2]. said that writing with their peers enhanced the students' motivation in revising and redrafting their texts and work. Posting work on sites such as wikis and blogs allows for a larger viewer accessibility which means depending on the privacy setting of the sites, a larger audience than a normal classroom will be able to read the texts. As a consequence, students will have to begin to anticipate an audience bigger than their sole teacher and their audience's expectations.

Peer feedback can also be part of the process of collaborative writing. Students who work together to write a text will often correct errors that their peers have made. Collaboration provides the opportunity where knowledge can be shared and divided between the group members by allowing the different perspectives and ideas of the participants to be raised, discussed and compromised (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994) [23].

In general, collaborative writing and corrective feedback work on the basis of the ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development); a theory Vygotsky put forward in 1978. A more recent and relevant concept to the theory is scaffolding; this is a process where a teacher or a more competent peer helps another student in their ZPD. This assistance gradually lessens as the students build their knowledge, similar to a house that is built and no longer needs scaffoldings. In this study, the participants were put in

groups and asked to comment and provide feedback to their classmates on wikis, i.e. a wiki classroom. The use of a wiki platform made collaboration and scaffolding possible for students. The more advanced students of English in the experiment were able to assist and aid the less proficient ones, according to the scaffolding theory and ZPD. Another advantage of using a wiki platform was the fact that more than one person, i.e. the teacher, would have access to each student's essay and therefore be able to provide corrections. This, as Ede and Lunsford (1990) [10]. reported, allowed students in the study to familiarize themselves with a number of new experiences, perspectives and opinions from different students as opposed to only receiving feedback from one point of view, the teacher. This in turn helped them in achieving a better standard of accuracy in their own writing.

Although there are advantages to using wikis as a tool in collaborative online learning, and students are more motivated when using their devices in learning situations, the idea of peer feedback is viewed with little enthusiasm. Many scholars (e.g. Chisholm, 1990; Hyland and Hyland, 2006) [5, 14]. have found that one of the most problematic issues in peer correction is that it is met with a lot of resistance and friction. This study aimed to overcome some of this resistance and lack of acceptance with the introduction of a Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) tool. With the help of a CSCL tool, i.e. a wiki-platform, more than one student will be able to correct and give feedback to an essay. It is hoped that if more than one peer gives the same feedback, the receiving peer is more open to accepting it. In addition, in this study, the students used pseudonyms when using the platform. This meant that the participants used made-up names for themselves in order to comment with more freedom and others to accept comments with less resistance because of who had written it or how reliable they thought a particular student's comment are.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1 Participants

The participants of this study were all non-Malaysian students who had enrolled in a language school in Kuala Lumpur, i.e. English Made Simple (EMS). They had registered to take part in the language centres preparatory IELTS classes. This is because these students needed to obtain an IELTS certificate to be able to further their studies in universities. As a requirement for enrolment, they had sat for a proficiency test and were all at a high pre-intermediate to intermediate level of English proficiency. One of the four IELTS preparatory classes of this centre was selected randomly for the purpose of this study. This particular class was comprised of 8 male and 10 female students; their ages ranging from 18-29 years. They came from varying countries in Asia. Ten of the students were form Middle-Eastern countries; two from Iraq, one from Egypt, three from Syria and four from Saudi Arabia. The rest of the students were from other countries, also in Asia; two from Georgia, one from Armenia and five from Azerbaijan.

2.2 Instruments

2.2.1 Feedback Checklist

For the purpose of commenting on their peers' essays, the students needed guidance. This was mainly due to the fact that correcting and commenting on a written piece of work is traditionally done by the teacher; therefore, when it was decided that the responsibility be given to the students, it became crucial that they first be taught and later guided through the process. For this reason, a feedback checklist was provided to the students.

This checklist was to be introduced and taught to the students during the first week of the experiment, i.e. between the pre-test and the administration of the first writing topic, the students were instructed in detail on how to provide comprehensive comments and feedback to their peers by going through the questions on the checklist one by one. In addition to the feedback checklist being a guide for the students to know "how to comment systematically" on an essay, it was to also make sure, students commented thoroughly on all the different components of the language.

These components were chosen from Jacobs' ESL Profile (1981), i.e., content, organization, language use, vocabulary and mechanics. Although the use of a feedback checklist did not guarantee that the all the students would comment on every component, it did help keep the feedback more systematic and also *not* forget a particular component.

2.2.2 Close-ended Questionnaire

After the students had sat for the post-test, they were given a questionnaire (Appendix A) to fill out. This questionnaire focused on asking the students' views and opinions on receiving corrective feedback from their peers through the new medium, i.e. wikis. The 20 questions on the questionnaire asked students to rate their responses, from 1 to 5, to statements such as; *I enjoyed using wikis for providing and receiving corrective feedback*, or *I valued the insights that my peers had on my essay* on a close-ended questionnaire ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. These 20 questions were later divided into six constructs, i.e. general perception on wikis, improvement in writing accuracy, the social aspect of wikis, the enjoyment aspect of wikis, the value of feedback and equal collaboration for quantitative data analysis.

2.2.3 Open-ended Questionnaire

Once the students had given their responses to the statements on the close-ended questionnaire, they were given an open-ended questionnaire (Appendix B). The purpose of this open-ended questionnaire was to gain a more in-depth view of what the participants thought of online collaboration for the purpose of providing their peers with feedback.

2.3 Procedure

A quasi-experimental design was carried out in this study to observe the perceptions of the participants in receiving feedback from their peers through the platform of wikis as opposed to the traditional teacher correction method. The pre and post-test results were used to examine to what extent students had accepted and taken into account the feedback given to them by their peers and to what extent the feedback given had benefited their writing skill.

At the beginning of the experiment, a pre-test was administered to all the participants with the intent of measuring the students' writing level before the experiment began and to make it possible for the researcher to compare the students' pre and post-test scores and observe the effectiveness of the wiki-based correction. These tests were rated by two individual raters whose inter-rater reliability

had been measured before the experiment began. The overall scores of the pre-test essays revealed the homogeneity of the class in the skill of writing as their scores were within two standard deviations above and below the mean score.

The next step in the experiment was to establish an online classroom on a website called wikispaces.com. This online classroom was where the treatment was going to be carried out, i.e. where the students would post their essays and read and provide feedback to their peers' essays. For the purpose of commenting on their peers' essays, the students needed guidance. Therefore, the students were given the feedback check-list and taught how to use it to provide their peers with comments and feedback to their essays.

Once the wiki-classroom was established, the students were added to it with their pseudonyms. The students were ready to start. The experiment took 13 weeks in total. In the first 3 weeks, the students were introduced to wikis and the checklist and were given time to familiarize themselves with both. From weeks 4 to 12, the students were given IELTS writing topics to write an essay on and also to give feedback to their peers on their essays. The IELTS writing topics were given on weeks 4, 7 and 10. The students had to write the essays in class, and then had a complete week to read two other essays from the wikispace classroom and comment on it using the checklist. On weeks 5, 8 and 11, the students were asked to read the comments and feedback made on their own essays (by their peers) and re-write their essays. This new version was also written in class, to avoid any kind of cheating and to keep the variables the same for all students. They then had one complete week again to read two other essays written by their peers and provide feedback on them. Once they had read all the comments on their essays, on weeks 6, 9 and 12, the students wrote their final versions of their essay in class.

On the 14th week, the students wrote one last essay which was marked and scored as the post-test. This was to be compared with their pre-tests to gauge out the participants' improvement. These post-test essays were marked by the same two raters who scored the students' pre-tests. The raters assigned a score to each of the components in Jacobs' ESL profile and a holistic overall score as they had done for the pre-test. Then, the mean scores of each component and the overall score given by the two raters was calculated and used for analysis purposes.

Once the students had sat for their post-tests and had received their scores, they were given a questionnaire, which asked the 20 questions regarding their views and opinions on online collaboration via wikis. The questionnaire was in the form of a close-ended questionnaire which required the students to tick boxes anywhere between 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' on how effective they believed the wiki-platform had been in improving their writing skill.

3. Results

The results of the close-ended questionnaire were calculated and analyzed quantitatively in order to investigate the students' perceptions on using a wiki-platform to collaborate with their peers online and outside the classroom.

The 20 questions on the close-ended questionnaire were first divided into 6 constructs according to the different aspect of the wiki-platform they were inquiring about. These constructs will be looked at separately and in detail below.

3.1 General Perception on Wikis

The first construct which will be looked at is the *General Perception on Wikis* with questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 20 asking the students to give their perception and viewpoints on how the wiki-platform helped and encouraged them to give feedback to their peers and also how it helped them implement that feedback and make corrections.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Close-ended Questions on General Perception on Wikis

	Questions	M	StD.
General Perception on Wikis	1	3.85	.86
	2	3.21	.8
	3	3.5	1.34
	4	3.78	.69
	20	4.07	.73

The mean score for question 20 was the highest in this construct. This means that many of the participants of the study agreed with the statement; *I found the concept of receiving different views on my essays very interesting and helpful*. The least agreed with statement was for question 2, with a mean score of 3.21. This question asked the students to rate from strongly agree to strongly disagree, how their experience with wikis was.

To support the quantitative data analysis and retract more insight into the students' perceptions and views on peer correction through wikis, an open-ended questionnaire was also handed to the participants (Appendix B).

Student *N* said, "The idea was great, I enjoyed giving feedback to my peers with anonymity and also receiving feedback from different people" Another student, *R*, wrote, "I think my essays have improved more than just grammatically-wise or with regards to vocabulary because I got two different people reading and correcting my paper and in addition to that, by reading my classmates' essays, I got a better idea on how to write my next draft."

As it is clear from both comments, the participants thought that the concept of having their friends read and provide their views on a text they had written through a wiki-website helped them improve their writing accuracy. Being able to do this outside the boundaries of the classroom and the time restraints of the class allowed the participants to read through other students' work in their own free time and using the electronic devices anywhere they were. This consequently had a positive effect on the social aspect of the experiment and gave the students a sense of satisfaction and learning even when they were not in the classroom.

3.2 Improvement in Writing Accuracy

Questions 5-9 on the questionnaire were group together asking the students whether they thought their accuracy had improved through collaboration in feedback via the wiki-platform.

As it can be seen from Table 2, below, the mean score for questions 5-8 which asked about the improvement in content, organizational skills, vocabulary and language use respectively are all 4 and above. This demonstrates that the majority of students believed that the content of their essays, the way they organized them, the vocabulary they used and the grammar structures they utilized in their essays had improved through the process of providing corrective

feedback via wikis.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Close-ended Questions on Improvement in Accuracy

	Questions	M	StD.
Improvement in Writing Accuracy	5	4.14	.53
	6	4.07	.26
	7	4	.39
	8	4.00	.39
	9	1.78	.97

However, as it can also be seen from Table 2. most students disagreed with statement 9. This question had asked the students whether collaboration with their peers through the wiki-platform had helped them in improving their mechanics. The results suggest that they thought their mechanic scores had not improved at the end of the 14-week wiki intervention. With a mean score of 1.78 for this question, it can be concluded that the students did not perceive the use of wikis and receiving comments on the wiki-classroom helpful in improving their punctuation, spelling and capitalization.

3.3 The Social Aspects of Wikis

One of the most successful aspects of wiki-based collaboration was the social interaction it brought to the students learning experience. Question 11 asked students about their degree of agreement/disagreement with the statements; '*I found the anonymity on the wikis useful for commenting on my peer's work.*' The mean score, shown in Table 3 shows that with a mean score of 4.5, the highest of all mean scores, most of the students agreed with the idea of being anonymous when commenting on their peers' essays. Question 13, also in the social construct category, asked the students to rate their agreement/disagreement to the statement, '*My peers and I engaged in communication/discussion using the wikis respectively'*. Its mean score was 3.14 which was also a high score. Both of these statements focused predominantly on the social aspect of the wiki-platform and how much interaction it brought to the language learning situation.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Close-ended Questions on the Social Aspects

	Questions	M	StD.
The Social Aspects of Wikis	11	4.5	.75
	13	3.14	.94

As the mean score for question 11 illustrates, i.e. the highest mean amongst all the 20 questions, the students strongly agreed with the anonymity of the whole process. The fact that they had pseudonyms and aliases helped them comment and correct their friend's essays without the fear of being judged or losing face. This encouraged them to be more comfortable and open when expressing their own opinions.

Question 13 also showed a high level of agreement with the results showing that the students were engaged in discussions and communication. The concept of communication and collaborative feedback was made possible through a wiki-platform. This wiki-platform, where students uploaded their essays and had access to their peers' essays at any given time in addition to the added anonymity, proved to be a success in encouraging peers to discuss ideas and suggest improvements.

Although teachers can strive to create a similar situation in the classroom where groups of students can sit together and present their views and ideas on a given essay, it is uncommon that they do and less likely that they do it on a regular basis. This is because of the time constraints and physical restrictions teachers have in a classroom. The limited time in a language classroom does not allow for these kinds of communications to take place regularly and therefore, deprives the students of receiving feedback from someone other than their teacher all the time. In addition to this, carrying this activity out face-to-face cannot utilize the concept of anonymity which was received very well by the students in this study.

3.4 The Enjoyment Aspects of Wikis

The next construct which will be looked at is how much the students enjoyed collaborative feedback performed on a wiki-platform. Table 4 shows, the mean score for question 12, i.e. *I enjoyed the re-writing/draft process to improve a single essay in the wikis*, is 4.5. This is one of the highest means in this questionnaire illustrating a high level of enjoyment.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Close-ended Questions on the Enjoyment Aspects

	Questions	M	StD.
Enjoyment in re-writing	12	4.5	.85

The results of the close-ended questionnaire and the open-ended questionnaire illustrate that the students actually enjoyed the process of re-writing their essays to a great extent.

Student *R* said, "Although at the beginning when we were told to re-write the essay, I felt unhappy about it, by the end of the course, I realized that re-writing helped me come up with better ideas as well. This was in addition to using my peers' suggestions."

Student *H* also claimed that re-writing the essays was much more enjoyable than she initially thought, "Re-writing the essays wasn't as bad or boring as I thought they would be. I actually liked how I saw my own writing improve each time."

However, there were students who did not like this process and believed it to be a waste of time. They claimed that because they had not received a lot of comments on how to improve their writings or because they did not really agree with the comments made, they did not see any point in re-writing. Student *S*, "I didn't enjoy the draft process. It was a waste of time." Another example was student *O*, he said, "Doing the same thing was a little boring. It would have been more productive to write another essay on a new topic using the feedback."

3.5 The Value of Feedback on Wikis

The fifth construct evaluated how the students valued the idea of online collaborative feedback through the wiki platform. Questions 10, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 of the questionnaire focused on getting this information. These questions gauged out how important students thought providing and receiving feedback on wikis was. All the mean scores in this construct were 3 and above, illustrating that most of the students agreed or strongly agreed with statements such as; "I used peer comments on wikis to revise/edit my writing."

The results from question 10, which is 4.07, shows that students valued the feedback they received very highly; therefore, used it in their re-writing process. Question 18, which also looks at the value of feedback on wikis received the lowest mean score in this category, i.e. 3. This question stated the following, "All my comments were taken into account by my peers." The participants did not agree with this statement as strongly as with the others. This lack of agreement could be because some students did not view their assigned anonymous peers as having enough knowledge to correct their work; or that even after the errors had been pointed, the receiving student still believed they were correct.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Closed-ended Questions on the Value of Feedback

	Questions	M	StD.
The Value of Feedback on Wikis	10	4.07	.73
	14	3.07	1.14
	15	4.07	.99
	16	3.57	.85
	17	3.57	.85
	18	3	.87

3.6 Equal Collaboration on Wikis

The sixth and final construct only had one question, i.e. Question 19. It asked the students whether they thought that equal collaboration took place on the wiki-platform or not; *All the members in my group commented on the essays equally*.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Close-ended Questions on Equal Collaboration

	Questions	M	StD.
Equal Collaboration when re-writing	19	1.85	1.35

As shown in Table 6, this question received the second lowest mean score. This means there was not much agreement on this issue amongst the students in the study. Most of the participants who took part in the wiki-based error correction experiment disagreed with this statement, bringing its mean down to 1.85. This issue was mainly due to the fact that providing correction and feedback to peers through a completely new platform was alien to the participants. They needed more time and practice to get accustomed with the idea of the wiki-platform being their point of collaboration and the place where they engaged with their peers outside the real-life classroom.

Another reason why the students did not think that there was equal collaboration could be because this was most likely their first experience providing feedback to each other and not relying on the teacher to be the sole corrector of their work. Although it is very likely that they have corrected their friend's and peer's essays before, it is unlikely that it had been done to this scale and for this number of essays; therefore, more opportunities like these are necessary to make it a more common routine and to increase the practice of collaboration amongst the students.

4. Discussion

The results of the questionnaire in the present study illustrated that the students were very pleased with the whole process of receiving and providing feedback to their peers on the wiki classroom. With mean scores ranging from 3.21 to 4.07, the students believed that commenting on their classmates' essays through the new platform helped them write more accurately and therefore they were in favor of the platform.

The students' perceptions towards how helpful the wikis was with regards to the individual components was clearly positive in the results. The mean scores of questions 5, 6, 7 and 8 which asked the students perceptions on how helpful the wiki platform was in improving their content, organization, language use and vocabulary was 4.14, 4.07,4 and 4 respectively. These high means illustrate the positive views the students had towards how effective the wiki-platform was in improving their accuracy in each component.

With regards to the social aspects of the wiki platform, the students' interaction on the wiki classroom was done using pseudonyms. The results of the questionnaire pertaining to this matter showed that students were pleased with the interaction that took place and its anonymity. These results were in contrast with what Ede (1994) reported. He attributed the mutual work of the students in a group to their familiarity to each other and their common goal of successfully completing a task whereas in this study, although the students were familiar with each other, they did not know who they were communicating with. Li's (2013) [19]. study also reported that working together to reach a common goal of writing an essay, was what motivated the students to produce highly accurate work; therefore, emphasizing on the success of social interaction through collaboration.

The aspects of collaboration and how much the feedback was valued by the students was also perceived positively by the students. With mean scores ranging from 3 to 4.5, the students claimed that they enjoyed the interaction they had with each other and they valued the feedback and comments they got on the platform. This platform was bringing students with different strengths and weaknesses together more accessibly. For example, in a group, one of the students may have been more proficient in grammar and structure whereas another might have had a good knowledge of vocabulary and the third may have excelled in ideas and content. Each would be more comfortable focusing on and providing feedback in their own area of expertise and in turn helping the outcome of each essay they read as a whole. In this way, the students' 'jointly constructed performance outstrips their individual competences' (Swain, 2000, p.111) [35]. Therefore, the students' collective work and collaboration reached a higher level of outcome than if they had only attempted to correct their own work. Working in small groups such as the three-person groups had advantages which were also apparent in studies by Piezon and Donaldson (2005) [26]. and Kessler and Bikowski (2010) [18]. They all reported that by utilizing smaller groups, the number of "free riders" were lower and the students were more prone to do their part.

Dobao (2012) [7]. claimed that in his study, the use of small groups helped in producing a more accurate text. However, the finding of this study, stated that not everyone contributed to the collaboration equally. This could be viewed as laziness by other students who tried to get a 'free ride' on a group project or it could be linked to their lack of motivation to correct another student's essay. It can on the other hand be related to a separate matter; the fact that students do not possess the knowledge to help and

consequently, are perceived as unhelpful or non-contributors. A few students also showed reluctance in providing feedback to their peers because they did not believe it was their responsibility. Correcting errors and essays has always been viewed as the teacher's responsibility. The questions inferring these perceptions were questions 14-18 in the questionnaire (Appendix A).

Although providing peer feedback is not considered a favourable task by students; in this study, the participants depicted relatively high motivation and enthusiasm towards it. The motivation which encouraged the participants of the current study to give feedback can be due to two main reasons among others; 1) the use of technology, i.e. wiki-platform, and also 2) the anonymity of the whole process.

This results from the open-ended questionnaire were supported by Li (2013) [19]. A participant in his study had stated, "We feel motivated to enter the Wikispace and check what has been changed. Other member's new posts can lead me to develop new ideas." One of the students in this study also made a similar statement, "I kept refreshing my page to see if anyone had read my essay and what they thought about it." This is seen by the new generations' need to constantly be on their devices, to upload something and to wait for feedback by other. Social media sites, such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, all require its users to upload/post a picture, an event, news or just a quote and then wait for other users to give their opinions on the uploaded document. Another finding in Li and Zhu's (2013) [20]. study revealed that their participants had built a positive rapport amongst their groups and this had in turn created an affective support. Therefore, "There was no specific division of labor; however, the group work was magically harmonious" (p.76). The results of the current study agreed with the fact that motivation did increase amongst students due to the use of technology; however, in this study, it was clear that the participants did not think everyone in the group contributed equally as the mean score for collaboration was 1.85. This could be due to the fact that this was the students' first-time providing feedback to their peers via a wiki-platform. Being their first experience may have caused a lot of uncertainty as to what exactly needed to be done or even why it needed to be done.

5. Conclusion

Peer correction has been looked at with skepticism by students and teachers alike from as early as correction becoming a controversial issue put forward by Truscott (1996) [36]. Although peer correction has only received attention in the past decade, re-focusing the attention in classrooms from being "teacher-centered" to "student-centered", some scholars such as Hedgcock &Lefkowitz looked at the results of peer-correction and the more traditional teacher-correction as early as 1992. They realized that students working in groups to correct an essay had the same results as a teacher correcting the essay. Other similar research conducted by Villamil & De Guerrero (1998) [37]. Mendonca & Johnson (1994) [23]. also revealed that peer-correction yielded similar results to teacher-correction.

However, it is not the case of improvement that matters to the students or one that they focus on in the long run, it is a matter of their perception. It is the belief of students that they are not capable nor proficient enough to correct errors or give feedback. To these students, if they were *that* good in a language, they would not need to be in a classroom learning it. This point of view held by many students, parents and teachers alike, has dulled the motivation for students to even try giving feedback to their peers as they do not think they are being helpful and might on the contrary believe they are doing more harm than good.

By introducing the element of technology and a space online where students were free to converse and do their work, this study introduced motivation to the concept of peer correction. This motivation was reinforced by the use of pseudonyms which again encouraged the students to comment on their peer's essay without the fear of being judged. In addition, the correction check-list guided students on how to comment and provide feedback. Students' lack of interest in commenting and correcting their peer's work could stem from their lack of confidence in themselves. The check-list gave the students the confidence they needed.

Scholars such as Digiovanni & Nagaswami (2001) [6]. Jacobs Curtis *et al*. (1998) []. Keh (1990) [17]. Mangelsdorf (1992) [22]. Stanley's (1992) [33]. O'Bryan (1995) [25]. and Porto (2001) [28]. all emphasized that although peer correction helped the teachers in saving time, it needed a fair amount of instruction to prove fruitful and effective. Sengupta's (1998) [31]. study proved that in his case, although being taught how to make correction had ultimately failed to increase the peer correction and its effect; it had yielded a more positive outlook toward peer correction itself.

McGroarty & Zhu (1997) [24]. focused their research on how training their experimental group help them exceed their control group in the quantity of feedback, the proportion of correction related to features such as content and organization and the amount of feedback on language use and vocabulary. The experimental groups' attitudes, i.e. the group which received training on how to provide feedback was also significantly more positive. These results are supported by the current study, where the students were all first trained, albeit briefly, and then expected to provide feedback, did it with a more positive attitude. The questionnaire's data analysis of questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 20 revealed a high positivity regarding peer correction using wikis.

As a result of a study conducted in Malaysia, by Ching (2002) [4]. on ESP students, it was made clear that correcting and evaluating their own work was an outcome of introducing peer-correction and peer-correction training to the students. Ching claimed that having been trained, the students responded with a more positive view towards the negative feedback they had received. These students had realized that they would not be able to improve, unless they were able to find their own errors and mistakes. In addition, it had become more acceptable for them to seek the help of their peers rather than going to their teacher all the time.

Overall, the results of this study go towards supporting the positive perception of peer correction through an online medium, i.e. wikis. The students' perception towards providing and receiving peer correction was very positive, and they believed that their views were being taken into account on many occasions. This in turn encouraged them to comment on their classmate's works more seriously. In the current study, the participants also felt positive toward how much value was being given to their comments and how often their friends would take their feedback in to account. In turn, they also gave more credit to their peers work and saw peer feedback as a method of receiving more than one

view point on a text.

This motivation can be in part attributed to the use of an online medium as it appealed to their generation, the idea of uploading a text and getting responses, especially as the responses they received were anonymous.

In further studies, one can compare two groups where one receives anonymous peer feedback through wikis or another online medium where as another group receives the feedback as a collaborative face-to-face activity. By comparing the results of these two groups, one can draw more precise conclusions as to whether and to what extent the medium and the anonymity of peer-feedback has an effect on the student's perceptions on peer-review.

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