

Engaging Saudi EFL Students in Online Peer Review in a Saudi University Context

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Abstract:

This study focuses on a Saudi English as a foreign language (EFL) context. It employs Google Docs as an educational tool to engage Saudi EFL students in online peer review to address some challenges faced by instructors when they implement peer review in class. The main goals of the study are examining what kinds of corrective feedback that Saudi EFL students provide when they edit their peers' texts in Google Docs, how they can improve their texts based on the collaborative online peer review, and what their attitudes are toward using Google Docs as an online peer review tool. The study utilizes Google Docs, an online questionnaire, and an interview as research tools; after thematic analysis, the results show that Saudi EFL students focus on local and global writing issues and provide different types of corrective feedback that aid them to improve their writing. They have positive attitudes toward using Google Docs in peer review. This tool allows them to engage in an online social environment outside the classroom, feel as critical editors, adjust their writing, and avoid embarrassment. The results also suggest that hierarchical power in the classroom and students' prior beliefs and experiences can impact their responses to the given feedback from teachers and peers. This study recommends instructors to integrate online peer review as a genre and move beyond low-stakes genre in EFL writing courses at the university level.

Key Words: corrective feedback, EFL writing, Google Docs, online peer review, Saudi EFL students

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