Exploring Student-Writers' Views on Replacing Teacher Feedback with Peer Feedback and Computer-Based Feedback

Suliman Mohammed Nasser Alnasser
Department of English Language & Literature, College of Arts
King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Abstract
In the last two decades, a large number of studies have emphasized the significant impact feedback (FB) has on students' writing. This emphasis has replaced the notion that teacher-based feedback (TBF) is the only source of feedback with the notion that there are other sources, such as peer feedback (PF) and computer-based feedback (CBF), that can be employed. It is commonly reported in the literature that writing teachers suffer from the burden of providing feedback, which gives rise to the need for finding alternative sources. Thus far, no studies have investigated the possibility of substituting TBF with FB that is jointly provided by peers and computer software. Therefore, the purpose of the study referred to here was to investigate foriegn language (L2) student-writers' views on whether or not peer and computer feedback can replace TBF, and how efficient these types of feedback are in a writing class. The study adopted a quasi-experimental approach that included quantitative (pre- and post-questionnaires) and qualitative (an open-ended section) methods. The participants in the study were 15 male English as a foreign lanaguge (EFL) undergraduate students undertaking a writing course in an English programme at a Saudi university. The duration of the study was 10 weeks, during which the participants went through four cycles of multi-draft essay writing. The intervention excluded the teacher from offering feedback and replaced the teacher's feedback with a systematic process that involved receiving feedback from fellow students and from a computer software application. The main conclusions of the study suggest that students are not yet ready to let go of teacher feedback, and that feedback provided by intermediate level learners can raise concerns on the part of the learners. Overall, the participants reported having a positive experience with the intervention. The implications and limitations of the study, and recommendations based on the findings are also presented.

Keywords: CALL, computer, feedback, learning, peer, writing skills