AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY: MOTIVATING STUDENTS TO LEARN EFL WRITING BY USING PEER RESPONSE

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ABSTRACT

The current state of English teaching and learning highlights the need to diversify teaching methods and improve the overall learning conditions to raise the standard of foreign language education, especially in English proficiency. The implementation of the communicative language teaching (CLT) method emphasizes the importance of student motivation and active engagement in learning a foreign language. Therefore, it is suggested that neglected activities in writing instruction should be considered to make lessons more motivating.

Undoubtedly, writing provides students with valuable opportunities to express themselves accurately and communicatively. However, Vietnamese students' writing proficiency remains low, primarily due to limited emphasis on writing practice in English assessments, which predominantly focus on grammar and reading comprehension rather than writing skills. To motivate learners and enhance their writing abilities, this study aims to investigate the peer response method in teaching EFL writing. The study involves 66 first-year students of English Language major from the School of Languages, Thai Nguyen University, divided into control and experiment groups. Over a 15-week period during the second semester of the 2022-2023 school year, an experiment utilizing the peer response approach is designed and conducted. The outcomes of the study demonstrate that the new method significantly improves students' writing skills and has positive effects on their attitudes and motivation. Additionally, the collected data will provide valuable information to teachers regarding the implementation of the peer response approach in teaching writing. Overall, by diversifying teaching methods, emphasizing writing practice, and incorporating the peer response approach, it is expected that students' writing motivation will be enhanced, leading to improved English proficiency.

Keyword: *- EFL writing, peer response, writing skills, learning attitudes, learning motivation*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Identification of the problem

English has gained significant popularity in Vietnam as a result of the country's increased international relations. The importance of learning English is not only driven by interest but also practical necessity. This demand has led to positive changes in language teaching methods and techniques. However, teaching writing effectively remains a concern.

As an English teacher at SFL-TNU, I have observed that students face numerous difficulties in learning writing, often finding it monotonous and stressful. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to adopt effective approaches that make writing lessons more engaging and improve students' proficiency. Traditionally, students have been passive recipients of knowledge, following instructions without active participation. However, in the communication approach to language teaching, student interaction and autonomy are emphasized, with students playing a central role in their own learning, while teachers act as facilitators.

Peer response, as a learner-centered approach, allows students to assess each other's work, correcting and improving language skills under teacher supervision. This approach is particularly beneficial in mixed-ability groups, as weaker students can learn from their stronger peers. Peer work serves as a valuable addition to various learning activities, promoting the development of foreign language skills. Despite its importance, research on peer response in language

teaching, especially its role in motivating students' writing skills, is limited. Further investigation is needed to address this research gap.

1.2 Purpose of the research

This research aims to: [1] investigate the impact of the peer response method on students' writing motivation through an experimental study, [2] examine students' attitudes towards the use of peer response in writing instruction, and [3] provide practical implications for teachers, enhancing their understanding of the active role students play in writing lessons.

To guide the research process, a research question is posed: "To what extent does the implementation of the peer response method contribute to students' motivation in writing?" This question serves as the central focus of the study, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of how peer response influences students' motivation levels when engaging in writing tasks.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. English writing

Writing is a taught language skill in language teaching. According to Ur (1996), while spoken language is acquired intuitively, writing usually requires deliberate instruction and learning, which is not easily acquired through exposure alone.

Approaches in teaching English writing: Two common approaches to teaching writing are the product approach and the process approach, as introduced by Nunan (1991):

Table 1: Approaches to teaching writing skill

a. The product approach	b. The process approach
- In favour of classroom activities in which the learners individually imitate copy and transform model of correct language, usually at sentence level.	- Favour of collaborative group work and conferencing to enhance motivation and positive attitude toward writing. Model texts are only for comparison.
- Organization of ideas is more important than ideas themselves.	- Ideas are important.
- Emphasize grammar exercises and correctness.	- The learners are encouraged to get their ideas on paper without worrying too much about correctness.
- Focus on the end result of the writing process: the writing paper of the learners.	- Focus on the various forms of classroom activities which promote the development of language use.
- Learners only produce one final draft.	- The final draft is the result of a long and painful process of writing successive drafts

The Product Approach: The product approach focuses on the end product of writing. Teachers present model texts for analysis of purpose, language, organization, and style. The goal is to help learners produce similar texts, and evaluation is based on criteria like rhetorical style, grammar accuracy, and organization (Brown, 1994). This approach is valuable for using models in text analysis and considering the purposes and readership of a text.

The Process Approach: Unlike the product approach, the process approach emphasizes thinking and writing processes (Brown, 1994). Nunan (1991) argues that while the product-oriented approach focuses on sentence-level writing skills, the process-oriented approach targets language use at the discourse level.

According to Hedge (1990), the writing process involves several stages: motivation, gathering ideas, planning, note-taking, drafting, revising, editing, and preparing for publication. Meanwhile, Oshima and Hogue (1991) outline three main steps: pre-writing, planning (outlining), writing, and revising drafts. Each step entails specific tasks that writers must fulfill to create a quality piece of work.

The process begins with pre-writing, which encourages learners to generate ideas and consider the purpose, topic, audience, and content. Planning involves organizing ideas through outlining, while drafting focuses on fluency rather than grammatical accuracy or presentation. Responding, either through teacher or peer feedback, plays a

crucial role in providing valuable input for improvement. Revising involves reviewing and enhancing the content, organization, and clarity of the writing. Editing focuses on refining the text for clarity and unambiguous communication. Lastly, evaluating includes assigning scores based on predetermined criteria, either analytically or holistically (Brown, 1994).

Overall, the process approach encompasses various stages, from pre-writing to evaluation, emphasizing the importance of thoughtful and iterative writing processes.

Microskills of writing: Brown (1994) identifies the following microskills involved in writing:

Produce graphemes and orthographic patterns of English
Produce writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.
Produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order patterns
Use acceptable grammatical systems (e.g. tense, agreement, pluralization), pattern rules
Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms
Use cohesive devices in written discourse
Use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse
Appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written texts according to forms and purposes.
Convey links and connections between events and communicate such regulations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification
Distinguish between literal and implied meanings when writing.
Correctly convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text.

Brown's list of micro skills for writing includes sufficient aspects required by a writer, yet, it does not have a clear balance for application. Ur (1996) emphasizes on the balance between the importance of expressing the ideas and that of formal aspects. Accordingly, the content or the message should be of fair balance with the form, i.e. the correct spelling and punctuation, acceptable grammar and careful selection of vocabulary.
In order to evaluate students' ability in writing skill accurately, raters have to pay much attention to some micro skills involving in the writing process that students need to acquire. Some useful information, which is taken from the website http://www.sil.org/linguallinks/, describes the micro skills as follows:
The writer needs to:
- use the orthography correctly, including the script, spelling, and punctuation conventions.
- use the correct forms of words: right tense, or case, or gender.
- put words together in correct word order.
- use vocabulary correctly.
- use the style appropriately to the genre and audience.
- make the main sentence constituents such as subjects, verbs, objects, etc clear to reader.
- make the ideas distinct from supporting ideas or information.
- make the text coherent so that other people can follow the development of the ideas.
- judge how much background knowledge the audience has on the subject and make clear what it is assumed that they do not know.

Writing activities: Doff (1988) and Brown (1994) classify writing activities based on the level of teacher control as follows: [1] imitative or copying, [2] controlled or guided writing, and [3] free-writing.
Imitative writing involves mechanical tasks like copying and is primarily suitable for beginners as it does not require understanding of meaning. Dictation, a more challenging activity, develops listening and spelling skills but does not foster expressive writing.
Controlled writing activities provide more challenges while still limiting creativity. Examples include changing tenses, completing sentences, and writing from given clues or pictures. Dicto-comp involves recalling and rewriting a paragraph based on key words provided by the teacher.
Freer activities involve writing based on a model text or oral presentation. Learners use the model as a basis to create their own compositions, incorporating personal information or information provided by the teacher.
Unlike imitative and controlled writing, free writing allows learners to have some choice in generating ideas, with certain limitations such as composition length or topic area.

2.2 Peer response

According to Hansen and Liu (2005), peer response involves learners assuming roles typically performed by teachers in providing feedback and critique on each other's written and oral work. Peer response is seen as an essential component in process writing and aligns with collaborative learning theory, which emphasizes the socially constructed nature of learning through peer communication.

In peer response, students give feedback and revise their papers based on their peers' comments, fostering collaboration and creating an authentic audience for their writing (Pathara, 2005). Peer activities contribute to students' confidence, creativity, and exposure to strong models, while also motivating them to invest more time in their tasks. The diverse readership generated through peer reading provides richer feedback than a single person (the teacher).

Peer response serves as a motivating tool and a means of raising learners' consciousness in task-based learning. It offers specific outcomes for students to achieve and requires them to negotiate language and problem-solving. Additionally, peer response promotes peer teaching, as students work together, check each other's work, and help one another improve (Hansen & Liu, 2005).

Implementing peer-correction reduces the teacher's workload by allowing students to complete pre-writing, during writing, and post-writing tasks before submission. It not only lightens the teacher's load but also enhances language development and coordination among students (Hansen & Liu, 2005).

Engaging in peer work, such as collaborative learning in small groups, encourages student responsibility for learning and leads to increased output and meaningful negotiation of meaning. These interactions, including clarification requests and confirmation checks, have been shown to enhance output quality (Hansen & Liu, 2005).

Teachers play a crucial role in promoting peer activities and active learning among all students. To achieve this, it is important for teachers to create a supportive and trusting environment that encourages peer support. Clear instructions and purpose should be provided to students to keep their writing and responding activities focused and meaningful. Peer response should take place in a non-competitive and non-threatening atmosphere, with constructive feedback that motivates the writer to continue working on their paper (Pathara, 2005).

When assigning tasks that involve students reading and responding to each other's work, teachers should consider the following ideas suggested by Pathara (2005): clear and achievable task guidelines, a non-competitive and comfortable environment, positive and constructive feedback, and allowing students to choose subjects that interest them for increased engagement.

2.3. Learning motivation

Motivation is crucial for successful language learning. Various definitions of motivation exist, including it being an internal drive that energizes and directs behavior (Kleinginna, 1981), an internal state that arouses and maintains behavior (Woolfolk, 2001), and a desire or want that pushes someone to achieve something (Brown, 2000). Different types of motivation include integrative, instrumental, intrinsic, extrinsic, global, situational, and task-oriented motivations. Among them, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations have an important part to play in classroom motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for its own sake, driven by personal interests and the desire to conquer challenges (Woldkowski, 1991). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, stems from external factors such as passing an exam or the hope of rewards (Harmer, 2001). In language learning, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations play important roles, and learners can be motivated by either internal or external factors depending on the circumstances.

Motivation is crucial for success in foreign language learning as it influences students' involvement, language skill development, and long-term language proficiency (Oxford and Shearin, 1996). Unmotivated students are unable to fully engage and develop their language skills. Motivated learners often display characteristics associated with motivation, including positive task orientation, ego involvement, a need for achievement, high aspirations, goal orientation, perseverance, and tolerance of ambiguity (Naiman et al., 1978). Teachers should employ strategies to boost motivation, considering both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Oxford and Shearin, 1996). To boost students' motivation, Woolfolk (2001) suggests several strategies. These include creating necessary conditions in the classroom, building students' confidence and positive expectations, demonstrating the value of learning, keeping

students focused on the task, and emphasizing the instrumental value of education by connecting it to real-life applications.

4. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

The researcher aims to investigate the effects of peer response on students' writing motivation and proficiency in EFL learning. The research question "To what extent does the implementation of the peer response method contribute to students' motivation in writing?" focus on students' attitudes towards peer response and the extent of its impact on their writing motivation and proficiency. The research hypothesis states that students' writing motivation and proficiency improve after utilizing peer response.

4.1 Research design

The chosen research design is an experimental study, comparing the proficiencies and motivations of students before and after the experiment. The experimental group receives the peer response treatment, while the control group receives an alternative treatment. Randomly assigned students in both groups are assessed on the dependent variable, which is writing proficiency.

The independent variable in this study is the peer response activity, which is hypothesized to affect EFL writing proficiency. The dependent variable is students' writing proficiency. The researcher manipulates the independent variable and ensures that the treatment and control groups are similar to attribute any differences in results to the treatments.

The study included 66 first-year English major students from two classes at SFL-TNU, with 33 students in each class. The study utilizes two groups: a control group (group without treatment of peer response method) and an experimental or treatment group (group receiving treatment of peer response method) with 33 students each

4.2 Data collection instruments

Questionnaires: For this experimental study, two questionnaires were administered: questionnaire A before the experiment and questionnaire B after the experiment. Questionnaire A gathered general information and assessed students' attitudes towards peer response, while questionnaire B measured changes in attitudes towards the effects of peer response on writing skills.

The questionnaire structure comprised two parts. Part 1 focused on students' background and their general desires from the course, using multiple-choice questions for easy analysis and open questions for specific reasons or wants. Part 2 aimed to gather students' opinions on peer response employing a 5-point Likert scale with ratings ranging from completely agree to completely disagree.

Pre- and post-experimental test: A pre-test and post-test were compared to determine students' initial and final performance levels. The pre-test measured writing proficiency before the experiment, while the post-test measured proficiency after. The score difference helped educators identify areas for improvement. The same test was used to ensure fairness and account for difficulty variations. The test reuse was reasonable due to the pretest papers not being returned and the considerable time gap between the pretest and posttest. At the end of the experiment, a posttest assessed writing skills and allowed the researcher to identify differences among the groups.

4.3. Data collection procedures

The questionnaires were pilot-tested on 10 randomly selected students who provided feedback on the design, content, wording, and layout. Their comments were incorporated into the final questionnaires, which were then administered to the student participants. The experiment spanned 15 weeks (around four months) during the second semester of the 2022-2023 school year at SFL-TNU. The teacher-researcher collaborated with another teacher to facilitate writing sections for both groups. To gather information on students' attitudes towards the treatment, a pretest, a posttest, and two attitude questionnaires were utilized. The study followed the following procedures:

Table 2: Procedures of data collection

Participants	Before experiment	Intervention of peer response experiment	After experiment
Control group (Class A)	- Questionnaire A - Pretest	- No intervention	- Posttest
Experimental group (Class B)	- Questionnaire A - Pretest	- Experimental treatment	- Questionnaire B - Posttest

At the beginning of the semester (week 1), both groups received a pre-experiment questionnaire (questionnaire A) consisting of four close-ended questions and ten scale questions. The questionnaire took approximately 10 minutes to complete. Following the questionnaire, a pre-test was administered to measure and compare the two groups' EFL proficiency in writing. The pre-test involved writing a composition of average length, which was scored by the teacher-researcher and the other teacher-collaborator using the same criteria:

Table 3: Scoring scale for writing test

Criteria	Mark
Task fulfillment	4
Lexical Resource	2
Grammar Accuracy	2
Unity and Coherence	1
Length	1

During the experiment, the control group (class A) received traditional EFL writing instruction without peer activities, while the experiment group (class B) participated in a four-month (16 weeks) peer response treatment. The procedure for the experiment involved the following steps:

- Explanation and comprehension check: The teacher provided a clear explanation of peer response in writing, its benefits, and the students' role in the experiment. Students discussed and corrected their understanding as a whole-class activity.
- Topic selection: Students collaborated with their peers to create a list of topics based on relevance, importance, difficulty, and available resources. This helped them choose appropriate topics for their writing.
- Peer response throughout the writing process: Peer response was used in all stages of writing, including brainstorming, planning, organizing, and drafting. Students received feedback from both their teacher and classmates. Working with peers throughout the process facilitated better response and increased negotiation of meaning.
- Revision and feedback: Students were organized into pairs to revise each other's writings. The teacher provided support and reminded students of appropriate language usage. Peer feedback and discussions focused on content and organization using a designated peer response sheet.:

Table 4. Peer response sheet for writing task

Name of writer: ....   Name of reader (responder):...........................
1. Is there enough information?
2. Is it interesting?
3. How can it be improved?
4. What did you like most about my paper? Why?
5. What transition words or phrases could have been added or removed to help you follow the paper better?
6. Was the main idea clear? If not, what can be done to make it clearer?
7. Were the supporting details relevant and well-supported?
8. Was the order of the supporting details logical and effective?
9. Please help me find any grammar and vocabulary errors?
10. Any other comments or suggestions?

To facilitate meaningful feedback and discussion, a response sheet was provided to guide students in asking specific revision-oriented questions and generate constructive comments. Students engaged in peer discussions and

incorporated feedback to improve their written papers. The teacher provided final comments and evaluation after students revised their work based on peer feedback. Empowering students as autonomous writers, they were allowed to retain certain aspects of their texts and justify why they chose not to implement suggested changes by their peers.

At the end of the four-month experiment (week 15), both student groups took a posttest on writing, which was scored by the teacher-researcher and collaborator using a grading rubric (Table 3). The test results were compared to measure the improvement in EFL writing proficiency. Furthermore, a post-experiment questionnaire (questionnaire B) was given to the experiment group (class B) consisting of 33 students. This detailed questionnaire included 10 scale questions to gather information about students' learning experiences, styles, motivation, and improvement in attitudes towards the treatment.

To analyze students' attitude towards peer response and its impact on writing proficiency, we will discuss the following:
- Students' attitudes, EFL writing motivation, and proficiency before the experiment.
- Students' attitudes, EFL writing motivation, and proficiency after the experiment.
- Comparison of students' attitudes, EFL writing motivation, and proficiency before and after the experiment.

This study used quantitative research techniques, including identifying, labeling, classifying, and transferring data to indexes.

5.1 Analysis of Questionnaires

Questionnaire was used to obtain students' general information and students' opinion about EFL learning and peer response method in writing lessons. Questionnaire A was distributed to both control and experimental groups to serve as evidence to the necessity for the implementation of the study. Questionnaire B was given to experiment group to see any changes in students' attitudes towards peer response after the treatment. To analyze the results, answers to questionnaires are summarized, classified and calculated.

Students' attitudes towards peer response method: Prior to the experiment, students' opinions on peer response method were assessed using questionnaire A, which contained 6 statements for students to indicate their agreement level with peer response in writing. The responses from a total of 66 students (from both groups) were collected, tabulated, and converted into percentages.

Table 5: Results of questionnaire A

(Percentage of response)

Do you agree with the following statements?	Completely Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Completely Disagree
1. Peer response encourages students' creativity and engagement.	0	52	10	38	0
2. Reading and providing feedback on others' writings is both enjoyable and beneficia.	0	41	29	30	0
3. Engaging in peer response fosters the development of critical reading skills.	13	59	5	23	0
4. Peer response activities support the improvement of communicative competence and facilitate second language development.	2	44	9	43	0
5. Peer response enhances the exchange of ideas, leading to a richer exploration of content and rhetorical aspects.	0	61	21	18	0
6. Participating in peer response activities strengthens classmate relationships and cultivates a sense of group unity among students.	0	30	8	62	0

According to the table above, there were no individuals who expressed complete disagreement with the given statements. However, prior to the experiment, some students had uncertainties or reservations about peer response as a new learning approach. The percentage of students who completely agreed was relatively small.

Following the experimental period, questionnaire B was administered to the experimental group (class B). Part 1 of the questionnaire retained the same content as before the experiment to examine any shifts in students' opinions regarding the peer response method:

Table 6: Results of questionnaire B, part 1

(Percentage of response)

Part 1: Do you agree with the following statements?	Completely Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Completely Disagree
1. Peer response encourages students' creativity and engagement.	50	50	0	0	0
2. Reading and providing feedback on others' writings is both enjoyable and beneficial.	0	82	0	18	0
3. Engaging in peer response fosters the development of critical reading skills.	43	57	0	0	0
4. Peer response activities support the improvement of communicative competence and facilitate second language development.	25	75	0	0	0
5. Peer response enhances the exchange of ideas, leading to a richer exploration of content and rhetorical aspects.	89	11	0	0	0
6. Participating in peer response activities strengthens classmate relationships and cultivates a sense of group unity among students.	21	79	0	0	0

Two tables shows a clear shift in students' attitudes towards peer response after the experiment. All students agreed or completely agreed on the effectiveness of peer response in stimulating creativity and activeness, developing critical thinking, enhancing communicative competence, promoting second language development, and increasing negotiation of meaning for content and rhetorical issues, in contrast to the pre-experiment data where nearly half disagreed or were undecided. Only one fifth of students found reading and providing feedback on others' writings not enjoyable and beneficial after the experiment. It is understandable that not all teaching strategies can satisfy every student all the time. Overall, students' attitudes towards peer response underwent a fundamental change, with a shift towards agreement or complete agreement in the post-experiment period.

Students' opinions after peer response treatment: The following table presents students' perspectives on the benefits of using peer response as an effective writing learning method.

Table 7: Results of questionnaire B, part II

(Percentage of response)

| II. Students' perspectives after peer response treatment:	Completely Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Completely Disagree
1. You find peer response activities highly enjoyable as they provide a valuable opportunity to share your concerns with others.	9	87	0	4	0
2. Your revisions, influenced by peer feedback, show significant improvements not only in vocabulary and grammar but also in expression and organization.	9	91	0	0	0
3. Engaging in English discussions and exchanging thoughts and experiences with others boosts your motivation.	21	72	0	7	0
4. Your writing skills have greatly improved through the application of the peer response method.	22	78	0	0	0

The data presented in the table indicates that a large percentage of students found motivation and enjoyment in participating in peer response activities. They experienced significant progress in their writing skills through this method. However, a small minority of students expressed disagreement with statements 1 and 3, highlighting the fact that not all teaching methods can cater to every student's preferences and needs consistently.

5.2 Analysis of tests

Analysis of pre-test: The following graphic chart gives an overall picture of distribution of the scores achieved by 66 testees in both groups (33 testees each group) before the experimental period.

Chart 1. Pre-Test Score Distribution
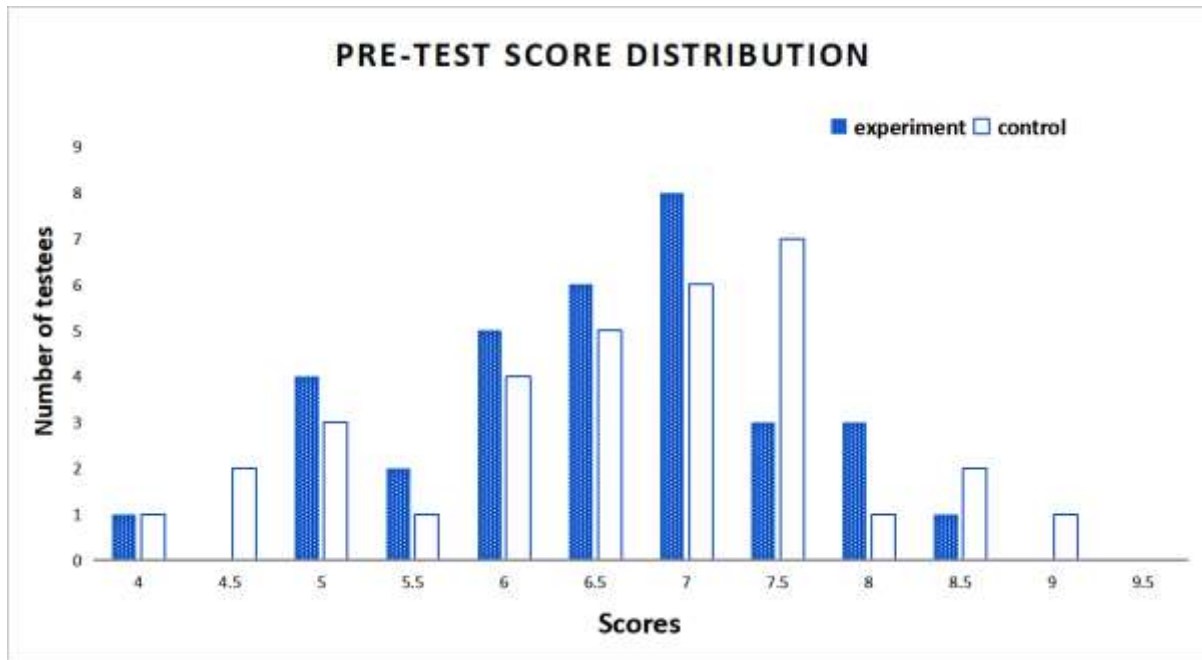
The pre-test scores for both groups are nearly identical: minimum score is 4, mode is 7, and median ranges from 6.5 to 7.5. The experimental group achieved a maximum score of 8.5, while the control group reached 9. The range for the experimental group is 4.5 and for the control group is 5.

The pre-test scores for both groups are similar: minimum score is 4, mode is 7, and median ranges from 6.5 to 7.5. The experimental group's maximum score is 8.5, while the control group's is 9. The range for the experimental group is 4.5 and for the control group is 5. Measures of central tendency (mode, median, and mean) show similarities between the two groups before the experiment. The mean difference is small (0.10), indicating similar writing abilities.

Table 8 : Comparison of pre-test performances of the two groups

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\Sigma fx}{N}$$

($\overline{X}$ = the mean
X = raw score
N = number of the scores
f = the frequency with which
a score occurs)

Scores	Experiment		Control	
x	f	fx	f	fx
4	1	4	1	4
4.5	0	0	2	9
5	4	20	3	15
5.5	2	11	1	5.5
6	5	30	4	24
6.5	6	39	5	32.5
7	8	56	6	42
7.5	3	22.5	7	52.5
8	3	24	1	8
8.5	1	8.5	2	17
9	0	0	1	9
9.5	0	0	0	0

Σfx	215	218,5
Mean	6.52	6.62
Median	6.5	6.5
Mode	7	7

Overall, there was little to no significant difference in the pre-test scores between the experiment and control groups. This suggests that both groups performed similarly on the test before the experiment, indicating no disparity in their EFL composition writing abilities. In summary, the pre-test results indicate that both groups had a similar level of EFL writing proficiency at the start of the experiment.

Analysis of post-test: The following graphic chart gives an overall picture of distribution of post-test scores achieved by 66 testees in both groups (33 testees each group).

Chart 2. Post-Test Score Distribution
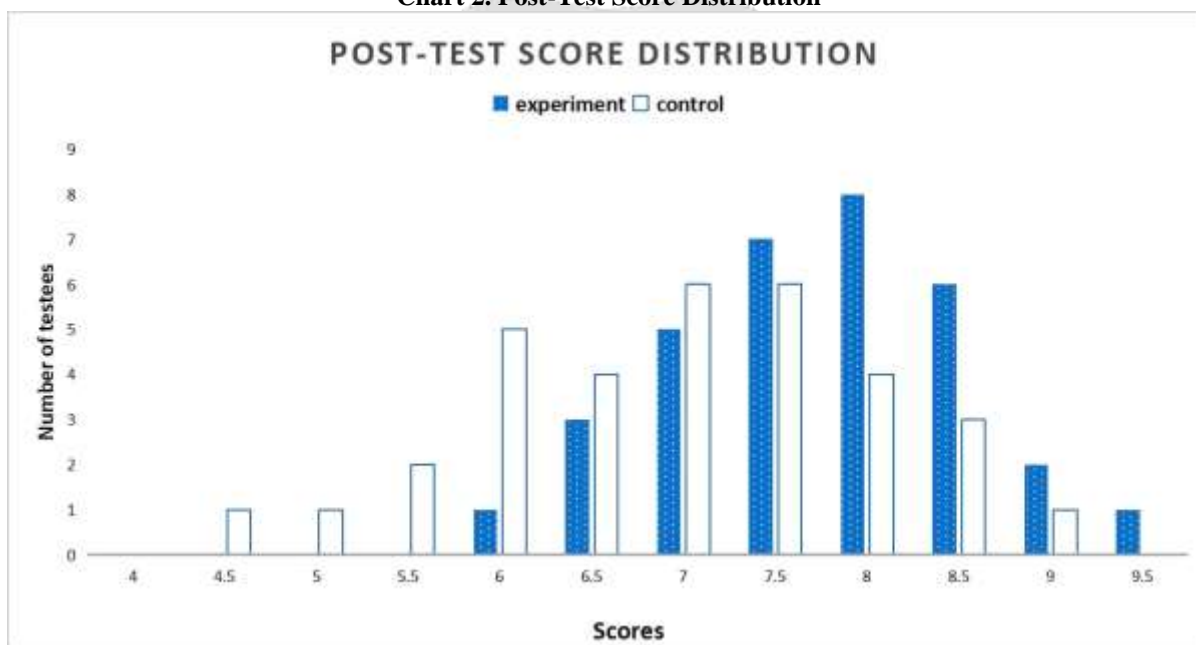
The graph clearly shows distinct score distributions between the experimental (E) and control (C) groups after the experiment. The E group achieved significantly higher scores compared to the C group. The minimum and maximum scores of the E group were also higher than those of the C group (E: minimum = 6, maximum = 9.5; C: minimum = 4.5, maximum = 9).

There are three measures of central tendency. Each plays a different role in determining where the center of the distribution or the average score lies:
- The mode (the most frequently occurring scores) of E group was 8 which is 1 point higher than that of C group.
- The median (scores gained by the middle testee in merit order) of E group is 7.75 while that of C group is 6.75 (Because there is an even number of scores, the median is taken to be midway between the two middle scores).
- The mean referring to the arithmetic average of a set of scores: i.e. the sum of the separate scores divided by the total number of scores (N), is a good indicator of average level of difficulty. It enables us to describe an individual student's score by comparing it with the set of scores obtained by a group. The means of the two groups enable us to compare the performances of students from each group.

The following table shows that the means, modes and medians of experimental were about one point higher than those of control group. These results indicate that the performances of E group after experimental period were obviously higher than the C group.

Table 9: Comparison of post-test performances of the two groups

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\Sigma fx}{N}$$

($\overline{X}$ = the mean
X = raw score
N = number of the scores
f = frequency with which
a score occurs)

Scores	Experiment		Control	
x	f	fx	f	fx
4	0	0	0	0
4.5	0	0	1	4.5
5	0	0	1	5
5.5	0	0	2	11
6	1	6	5	30
6.5	3	19.5	4	26
7	5	35	6	42
7.5	7	52.5	6	45
8	8	64	4	32
8.5	6	51	3	25.5
9	2	18	1	9
9.5	1	9.5	0	0
Σfx		255.5		230
Mean		7.74		6.97
Median		7.75		6.75
Mode		8		7.5

The final examination results of the experiment group's pre-test and post-test scores showed a positive outcome. Analyzing and comparing these scores is crucial for assessing the impact of the treatment on EFL writing ability. While some students in the experiment group may have obtained lower post-test scores due to psychological factors, the difference in mean scores indicates the effectiveness of the peer response method. Descriptive statistics of both tests provide insight into the proficiency levels of both groups before and after the experiment. Clearly, the experiment group outperformed the control group in the post-test, with higher mean, mode, and median scores. Overall, after sixteen weeks, the experiment group demonstrated significant improvement in writing proficiency, as observed through measures of central tendency and dispersion.

6. CONCLUSION

Peer response is a recommended approach for teaching writing due to the challenges associated with this skill. An experiment compared peer response with the traditional teacher feedback method for first-year students at SFL-TNU. The results demonstrated that peer response was more effective in improving EFL writing proficiency and motivation. The experiment group outperformed the control group, with a mean score of 7.75 compared to 6.75. This confirmed the greater effectiveness of the peer response approach in enhancing EFL writing proficiency.

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